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Edward Bellamy

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OAKWOOD HALL.

VOL. I.

OAKWOOD HALL,

A Novel;

INCLUDING A DESCRIPTION OF

THE LAKES

OF

CUMBERLAND AND WESTMORELAND,

AND

A PART OF SOUTH WALES.

By CATHERINE HUTTON,

AUTHOR OF "THE MISER MARRIED," AND

"THE WELSH MOUNTAINEER."

IN THREE VOLUMES.

VOL. I.

LONDON:

Printed by Strahan and Spottiswoode, Printers-Street;

FOR LONGMAN, HURST, REES, ORME, AND BROWN,

PATERNOSTER-ROW.

1819.

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PREFACE.

OAKWOOD HALL, though last published as an entire work, was my first attempt at writing for the press, and is the one alluded to in the preface of the Miser Married, as having been undertaken upon reading a celebrated novel of great exuberance. The novel which occasioned it will be found in Mrs. Oakwood's library in the present work.

Oakwood Hall was cut into shreds, and published some years since, under the title of Oakwood House, in the periodical publication called La Belle Assemblée: the work, as it is now offered to the Public, has received great additions, and, I hope, many improvements.

Like the inimitable author of The Antiquary, I lay down my pen as a writer of novels. Like him, I may resume it; for, in this world, where every thing changes, I hold a change of mind to be pardonable: but I have not the temptation to change which that great painter of character and manners had, his store of learning, or his fund of humour. If I have written

well, I should be careful not to write worse; if I have not written well, I have already written too much.

CATHERINE HUTTON.

BENNETT'S HILL,
near Birmingham,
Feb. 1819.

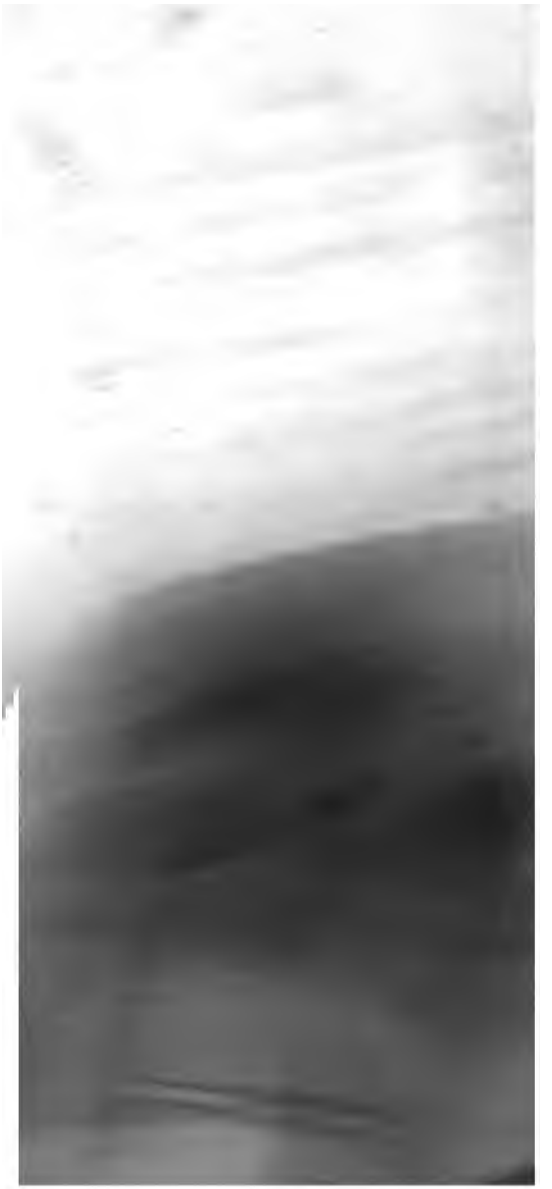
OAKWOOD HALL.

LETTER I.

TO MRS. BRUDENELL, BELMONT COTTAGE.

Ferrybridge.

Behold me thus far on my way to my native dale; my maid Anson my only companion in a post-chaise, and my man James my only attendant. You bade me write an account of my journey; of what I see, feel, and imagine; in a word, you require the Life and Opinions of Jane Oakwood, during a visit to her brother in Yorkshire. May you not repent your commands. I shall make but one condition;



the town itself, which is one long wide street, with a few collateral branches, is justly celebrated for neatness and elegance. I sauntered to its church, a handsome ancient structure, with a tall tower steeple; but it hurt my eyes to see those spaces occupied by sash windows, which were originally destined to receive small panes, fastened into lead; if not painted glass. I was attracted by a female figure in basso relievo, over the entrance, and approached her, hoping to gain some information respecting ancient costume; but when I found that the lady had a pair of wings springing from her shoulders, and that her business was to hold a coat of arms, I thought further examination unnecessary.

The same kind of road, between rows of stately trees, that had conducted me into Doncaster from the

south, led me out of it on the north. The fields are fertile; but the houses congregate in villages, and are not scattered about the country. To Wentbridge, which is ten miles, I do not recollect more than four near the road. One of these is a country inn, about seven miles from Doncaster, which holds out the sign of Robin Hood and Little John, and on the other side the road is a well, with a small stone building erected over it, still called Robin Hood's well. The neighbouring grounds, which are now a park and a common, were then a forest; and were the abode of that celebrated outlaw, and the scene of many of his exploits; no doubt the well was used by him and his followers.

In the park stood the stump of a tree called the Bishop's tree root: a man is living near the spot, who knew

Hood set his back against a tree, and his foot against a thorn; and I am not sure I did not actually see the thorn itself; for there are still some very old ones in the park. I saw *threescore and ten of bold Robin Hood's men,* come marching to their master's assistance, at the well-known sound of his horn. I saw the Bishop a suppliant in his turn, denied the pardon he refused to grant, led by the hand, treated with venison and mock civility, robbed, and made to dance round a tree, the existence of which is still remembered. In short, I sung the whole ballad to Anson, and you are very fortunate I do not transcribe it to you.

I have such a veneration for antiquity, that I shall introduce to your notice a couple of old shattered boards, held together by pieces of iron, which form the sign of a little public-house

at the entrance of the village of Wentbridge. The figure represented is a Bell, in a new, bright blue livery, richly trimmed with gold. The inscription

"1633.
The Blue Bell on Wentbridge Hill.
The old Sign's existing still."

And rustic Royalists and Oliverians, Jacobites and Williamites, Whigs and Tories, Pittites and Foxites, have tippled under it.

Much as I admire white houses and white roads, the clouds of limestone dust which blew in my eyes at Ferrybridge disgusted me; and I shut my windows and amused myself with observing the loading and unloading of the heavy coaches from York to London. These are ponderous machines, and of no small importance. Besides the visible cargo of inside and outside

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OAKWOOD HALL.

VOL. I.

native fields and woods, and the three small market-towns I had passed through in my way.

York has an air of grandeur and antiquity; of gentry, if not nobility; of business, but not of trade. The shops are inferior only to those of the metropolis. Indeed the people here have a proverb, "You may have everything at York you can at London, and Acomb sand beside;" meaning a fine sand brought from the neighbouring village of Acomb, for the purposes of scouring. The bridge over the Ouze is high and narrow. The streets are narrow and crowded, and many of the houses project over them. There are twenty-three parish churches in York, four large city gates, and five posterns. Some of the churches are beautiful; all are venerable. The tower of Christ church, on the pavement,

is literally a lantern; an open octagon, supported by eight pillars. The church of St. Margaret, Walmgate, has a curious Saxon porch, of five round arches, each within and smaller than the other; and each supported by round pillars touching the side walls. The two outer arches are ornamented with human figures, beasts, and monsters, carved in the stone; the three inner with knots, and different devices.

The church of Saint Martin, Coney Street, has a curious pulpit cloth, of ancient needlework. The centre piece represents the figure of Jesus Christ upon the cross, and God the Father, seated above, supporting him. Around is a border, divided into different compartments, each containing a whole length figure, about six inches in height. The whole is worked in some-

thing like tent stitch, with shades of drab-coloured silk, on linen cloth, which it once entirely covered; but time has, in some places, laid the cloth bare. The figures, and even the features, are extremely well executed. The head of the Deity, that of a respectable old man, has an embroidered golden sun, like a watch case, hanging over it, which may be lifted up at pleasure. The dress of the figures in the border is that of the beginning of the fifteenth century, the reign of Henry the fourth. The rest of the pulpit-cloth, on which these pictures of needlework are sewed, is crimson velvet, studded with silver stars.

But the cathedral of York! I cannot describe it. When I stood without, and contemplated its south side; when I went on, and raised my aching eyes

to its west end, where two grand towers arise, and between them perches for a thousand images, some of which, alas! are empty; when I stood in the centre within, and turning round, viewed its four matchless windows; I can give you no idea of what I saw, or what I felt. I, who have such a mania for cathedrals, that I have travelled miles in every direction, and hundreds in some, to see one! I, who regret the reformation on no account whatever, but that we can no longer build cathedrals! When one man could persuade another that his sinful soul would go to heaven, if he cheated his heirs, and left what he could no longer enjoy, towards building a church; what magnificent piles arose! Now, how difficult to obtain, by subscription, a few paltry thousands, to rear the plainest edifice!

York cathedral was two hundred

years in building, and each prelate endeavoured to outvie his predecessor in what was added to it. It is 524 feet in length from east to west; the transept 222 from north to south; the height of the body of the church 99. But it claims precedence of all cathedrals for the beauty of its windows. That at the east end is 75 feet high, and 32 broad, of painted glass; and is said to be the most magnificent in the world. The upper part is remarkable for its tracery; the lower, in a hundred and seventeen partitions, represents almost the whole history of the Bible. Its opposite, at the west end, though inferior on the whole, is said to surpass it, in its curious tracery. The noble window at the end of the north transept is five distinct windows joined together; and you are told it was the gift of five maiden sisters, who each worked a

pattern in embroidery as a model for the tracery of her share of the present. The south transept has six windows; one circular and very fine.

A celebrated screen, containing statues of all the Kings of England, from William the Conqueror to Henry the sixth, separates the body of the church from the choir. It is said to have been executed in the reign of Henry the Sixth, and to have included the statue of that monarch, which the archbishop of the next reign took down, in compliment to Edward the fourth. The niche remained empty, till one of his successors complimented James the first with the vacant place, on his passage through York, to take possession of the throne of England.

The chapter-house appears to me one of the wonders of the world. Without, it is an ugly excrescence,

with a sugar-loaf top, growing out of the north transept. Within, it is an octagon room, 63 feet in diameter, and 67 feet in height, to the centre of the roof, which is not supported by any pillar. The entrance occupies one of the eight sides, and over it were once placed statues of the Virgin Mary and twelve apostles, of solid silver, gilt. These have been taken away; and had the whole cathedral been built of the same material, not one ounce would have remained upon another. The other seven sides of the octagon are alike. They each contain six marble seats, arched over the top. Above these runs a gallery of stone, so exquisitely carved, that to have an idea of it, it must be seen. The sculptor's workmanship was formerly covered with painting and gilding, which is now almost obliterated by time. Above

the gallery, each of the seven sides contains a noble window. In this room the business of the church should be transacted; but, on account of the damp, its commanding officers adjourn to the council-room, or inner vestry, and this is only used on great occasions. What that business is, is unknown to the prophane. The attendants are sworn to secresy, and the guide looked as if it were not his place to conjecture.

In the vestry I was shown a threadbare pall of gold tissue, which was carried over James the first, when at York; a pastoral staff of silver, intended to decorate a catholic archbishop, in the reign of James the second; and several rings, taken from the fingers of different archbishops, when their tombs were opened in the year 1736. The dates of the rings are

1258, 1315, 1423, 1476, and 1544. Two of them have each a single ruby.

But, above all, I was shown the famous horn of Ulphus, king of the western part of Deira; the title deed by which the church holds lands of great value to this day. The two sons of Ulphus quarrelling about the succession to his estate, he determined to show no partiality to either: he repaired to York, taking with him the horn out of which he usually drank, and filling it with wine, he knelt down before the altar, drank it off, and piously defrauded them both, by giving the horn, with all his possessions, to God and Saint Peter; and leaving, as was customary in these cases, the dignitaries of the church executors and residuary legatees. They have found this summary way of conveying an estate as good as twenty skins of parch-

ment and forty thousand words. The horn is made of an elephant's tooth, and has a broad band of metal round it, on which different figures are rudely engraved. Its original ornaments were of gold, but they shared the fate of the Virgin Mary and the twelve apostles.

In a room leading to the vestry, I saw two ancient half-circular chests, whose iron hinges spread over the lids, like stalks and flowers. I enquired their use; and was told that they had formerly contained the treasure and valuable utensils of the church. They are now said to be empty, or filled only with rubbish; the sacred chalices, mitres, and copes having, perhaps, been plundered by heretics, and some other place found for the money.

If the revenues of the cathedral make rich clergymen, the number of other churches in York make poor.

The rectory of Saint Dennis, Walmgate, is only twenty-three pounds a year; and a part of it arises from the rents of small houses, torn from the bowels of the poor, and half swallowed up in repairs.

LETTER III.

TO MRS. BRUDENELL.

Oakwood.

I ARRIVED at this place last Thursday. I cannot express my various emotions as I approached it; the scene of childhood and youth, so long unvisited. Every path and every field was marked by some event, and on every bush there hung a tale. My reflections naturally reverted to myself. My activity, my elasticity, that

"Golden time of youthful prime,"

so pathetically lamented by Burns, was gone. But I did not ask, with

him, whose excesses had brought on the sufferings of a premature old age,

"Why com'st thou not again?"

I was grateful to the Supreme Ruler of the Universe, that I had not yet to endure the

"Weary, weary days,
And nights of sleepless pain."

Fields and paths and trees remain; but every human face and figure was unknown to me. The inhabitants were either not those I had left behind, or so changed that I could discover no traces of what they were. I was surprised to find even my brother so much altered, though I have seen him many times since I quitted Oakwood: but the last is fourteen years ago, and that, at our age, is enough to metamorphose a young man or woman into an old one. He would find the present Jane Oakwood very dif-

ferent from the former; but he forbore to remind me of it. He received me with great affection.

'Like me, my brother has led a life of single blessedness. He was afraid I should find a bachelor's house unpleasant; though he begged me to consider myself as its mistress. His habits, he said, had long been such as to disqualify him for society: he had not only forgotten the forms of ceremony, but of good breeding. I assured him that I should hold the smallest of his habits sacred; and that I had not been more than fifty years in the world, without contracting some habits myself, which might require indulgence. I should ask but one thing of him, which was his love, and all the rest I would make out for myself. He embraced me, and ringing the bell for his housekeeper, quitted the room.

Mrs. Simpson appeared in a ruby-coloured silk gown, a clear-starched lawn apron and handkerchief, and as many petticoats as would have clothed a family of half a dozen full grown daughters. Her hair was powdered, and combed over a roll, and her cap crimped like the florendines of my grandmother, who learned the art of pastry at a regular school. The poor woman came in trembling, and stroking down her apron, and begged to know my commands. I told her I had none to give.

"To be sure, ma'am," says she, "my master keeps a very good table, and has every thing comfortable about him; for he leaves all to me; but it can't be like what such a lady as you is used to, and he bid me take my orders from you, ma'am."

I told her I should make no alteration whatever; that all would still be left to her; and that I had no doubt her experience and care would make it as comfortable to me as to her master.

The poor woman looked delighted. "As to *experence*, ma'am," said she, "I've had enough; for I've lived with my master above twenty years, and a good master he is; though, to be sure, *he has his ways;* and as to care, ma'am, that sha'n't be wanting. I remember when I had lived with my master about three years, I forgot to ask him what pudding he would have for dinner; and he was going a hunting, and I run out, and he was just mounting his horse. 'Sir,' says I, 'I beg your pardon, what pudding 'll you please to have for dinner?' 'Whatever you've a mind,' says he.

'Then, sir,' says I, 'I'll make one of my own head, shall I?' And my master's a very joking gentleman, at times, ma'am. 'Aye,' says he, 'do; but don't put too much snuff in it.'——To be sure I do take a pinch now and then; for when I'm low-spirited it revives me." To the truth of this part of her tale, the good woman's nose bore testimony. "And my master liked my pudding," continued she, "and ever since then he gives me no orders, and I know what he likes, and he never knows what he has for dinner, till he sees it on the table."

I desired she would continue not only to make puddings but every thing else of her own head; and she left me, courteseying and saying she could not desire a more *agreeabler* lady to come into the house.

I believe a female visitor was never

known at Oakwood in the memory of any of the servants; and my coming was as much dreaded by the whole household, as the arrival of the fox could have been among the poultry. The master himself was not without his share of apprehension, both on my account and his own: on mine, lest he should not make his house agreeable to me; on his own, lest he should be put out of *his way*. But now I have been here almost a week, and the servants find I do not attack them, and the master finds that I can provide for my own amusement, without putting him to the heavy fatigue of entertaining me; we are the best friends in the world. Our grand maxim is, *that each shall have his way, and no one shall interfere with the way of another*; and if it were more widely

diffused, I believe society would be the better for it.

My brother's way is an uncommon one; but I do not condemn it on that account. He will not suffer any thing to be killed in his house larger than a flea; though he knows his own grounds supply his table with mutton and venison, his farm-yard with poultry, and the adjoining river with fish. He will have every thing put to death instantly, and with as little pain as possible, for its own sake; and for his, he will have it done at the farm-house, which is at a distance, that he may not know when an animal is to die.

In his younger days he was fond of hunting; but he has left it off from principle. He will eat of hare, if it have been shot; for, as all creatures must die, he thinks a gun may occasion less

pain than disease; but he can no longer witness the distress of a hare with the dogs in pursuit of her; or suffer such persecution, where he is master. Even a fox, whom, as a robber and murderer, he thinks it right to destroy, he will not allow to be hunted.

How then you say can an old bachelor spend his time; for of course he will neither shoot nor fish? you are right; he will not: but how he employs his time you would find it difficult to guess. He labours in his plantations. Not like a gentleman; but like a man, and harder than a man who works for hire. His callous hands are familiar with the mattock, the spade, and the wheelbarrow. His pleasure grounds are so extensive, that there is always room for improvement, at least for alteration; and if he consider it improvement, it is enough. In this place, shrubs must be stocked

up, the ground must be dug three feet deep, the gravelly soil carried away, and manure and fresh earth must be brought from a distance to supply its place. The whole must be levelled, and planted in a different form; and while this is doing, he is up at six o'clock in a morning; dressed in a nankeen jacket, cap and trowsers, if the weather be mild; a hat and woollen jacket and trowsers, if it be cold or wet; shoes studded with more than ploughman's nails; and taking half a dozen men with him, he is not only superintendent of the work, but chief labourer. His exercise is so violent that it frequently obliges him to throw off his jacket, and work in his shirt. No weather interrupts his labour but snow. He has a fire in his dressing-room, winter and summer, and his valet, who has a much easier place than his master, has always a set of clothes hang-

ing round it, ready for him, when he comes in. We dine alone, and he commonly dresses before dinner; but if the work be of very great importance, the only ceremony he observes is washing his hands; and after he has allowed himself the workmen's hour, he toils again till six or seven o'clock. He is generally so fortunate, before his *job* is finished, as to find another that *must* be done: if not, the interval is insupportable, and therefore it is never long.

Adieu. You who have seen me, not a florist, but a downright gardener; who have admired the tulips, hyacinths, ranunculuses, and pinks I have cultivated with my own hands, will perceive the resemblance between my brother and your friend.

JANE OAKWOOD.

LETTER IV.

TO MRS. BRUDENELL.

Oakwood.

My apartment is the same I occupied in my youth, when every day brought some acquisition or improvement. My dressing-room is still hung round with flowers, traced by my hand, and the fire screens are my needlework. The view from its windows is almost divine, but I will spare you the particulars. Wood and water, hill and vale, rock and meadow, admit of infinite combinations by nature; in description they are all alike; and I have little more charity for them than for the state of the atmosphere. I will however inform

you, that Oakwood stands in one of the beautiful dales of this country, and commands it to a great extent; with the stupendous hills, which guard it on each side, and the river which runs through the bottom.

"And this our life, exempt from public haunt,
Finds tongues in trees, books in the running brooks,
Sermons in stones, and good in every thing."

But running brooks are not our only books. My brother's library is all that an English gentleman could desire. Besides the best histories, ancient and modern, of every country in the world, he has all English historians, from Hollingshed to Hume; all Voyages and Travels, from Columbus to Lord Macartney; all Poets, from Chaucer to Burns; all dramatic writers, from Shakespeare, Ben Jonson, and Beaumont and Fletcher, to Colman and

Mrs. Inchbald; and all the Novels of Richardson, Fielding, Smollett, Cumberland, Holcroft, and Godwin. I should swell my letter into a Bookseller's catalogue, were I to enumerate the Antiquities, Topography, and Miscellaneous Works; and he is continually adding all that comes out, which is either worth reading or looking at.

But the number of my brother's books is nothing, compared with their quality and dress. In that they are exceeded by many noblemen's and gentlemen's libraries; in these, I believe, they are scarcely to be paralleled. They exhibit every thing that is most rare and costly in paper, printing, engraving, and binding. No book in his library has a superior out of it. Indeed, should that happen, by an after publication of the same work, it is immediately added.

To look at my brother's books, giants, where giants could be found; arrayed in red, green, and yellow morocco, half covered with gold; arranged in the nicest order, and viewed through plate glass; you would suppose they were to be seen, not read. Just the reverse. He reads them all through, except books of reference, and never lets any body else see them, if he can help it. One of the singularities of his library is, that almost all may be read with pleasure, and nothing is admitted to make up a show, without some intrinsic merit of its own.

From our father my brother has inherited a taste for reading; from our mother a taste for rich and splendid furniture; these, combined, have produced his library. His book-cases are as remarkable as their contents. The parts that can never be seen are mahogany,

by his particular order; and the fronts are carved, and inlaid with every kind of costly wood, in figures and different devices. His correctness and care he derives from both our parents; and they are such, that there is not a spot upon a leaf, or a scratch upon a binding, in his whole library.

Mr. Oakwood's prints are not less extraordinary than his books. In general he does not purchase the entire works of any engraver; but only selects the best pieces. Of these he has thousands, French and English, single prints, companions and sets; all the finest impressions, and bound up in portfolios of Russian leather, as large as a card-table.

Here, then, is an employment for a snowy day; and for a part of every day; and I share it as I please. Pictures my brother has none; except fa-

mily portraits. As he says himself, he keeps one hobby horse in so expensive a manner, that he cannot afford a pair.

My brother loves to contemplate the physiognomy of celebrated men; and every part of his house that is proper for such works of art, is ornamented with their busts. Though firm to a party himself, talents or notoriety, of any kind, or on any side, is a sufficient warrant for admission among the dumb inhabitants of Oakwood Hall. Here Pitt and Fox, Percival and Bellingham, Castlereagh and Burdett, forgetting all animosities, stand quietly by the side of each other.

Neither are all our tongues tongues of trees. My brother has gradually declined the society of the neighbouring families; our vicar has a better living, and does not reside here, and Mr. Nevil, his curate, though a young man of

good sense, has indulged himself in laughing at some of my brother's peculiarities, and is not admitted into the house. But it is not good for man to be alone. Every evening, after supper, John Freeman, a sturdy yeoman, who lives opposite the park gates, comes to talk over history and politics with Mr. Oakwood, and to share his bowl of negus. It is lucky that, though their politics differ, they are not directly opposite; for my brother is irritable and warm, and John is stedfast as a rock.

In his youth, John Freeman cultivated a small paternal estate; but preferring a life of ease, he now lets it for a hundred pounds a year, and with his wife and an only daughter, lives on his income. They keep no servant; but the wife's sister, Mrs. Anderson, lives with them, and paying a trifle for her board, assists in the different employments of

the family. The whole of John's education consisted in learning to read and write; but he had such an uncommon fondness for the former of these occupations, that, at a very early period, almost in infancy, he had read the Bible and Rapin's History of England. His memory was so retentive, that he not only knew all the events, but all the characters of the Jewish and English histories; and, of the latter, all the chronology. This knowledge was prodigious; but here John stopped. During his farming life he continued to read the History of England on a winter's evening, and the Bible on Sundays; but he added nothing to his stock of information. He would not look into any other history than that of Rapin, if it fell in his way. Believing that to be the best and most faithful, he thought it would be waste of time to read a worse,

and endangering his firm conviction of right and wrong to read a different. This last fear was groundless; for no man was ever less likely to be shaken in any opinion he had once adopted.

When John Freeman let his farm, he found so much leisure on his hands, that he perceived the necessity of extending his studies. The whole world of fiction, including poetry, he utterly despised. He believed literally in the celebrated maxim of Boileau—

"Nothing is beautiful that is not true."

He read the histories of Greece and Rome. Ideas do not make the same indelible impression at fifty, as at seven years of age; but he is nearly as well acquainted with Sparta and Athens, as with Jerusalem and London; with Philip of Macedon and Alexander the

Great, as with David and Henry the fifth; with Solon and Lycurgus, as with Solomon and Alfred. Here his knowledge rests for ever; and he would shut his eyes manfully against any thing that should tend to increase it.

John Freeman is a republican of the old school; a steady admirer of the ancient republics of Greece and Rome, and of liberty in opposition to monarchy. He is a republican by descent, and inherits his principles with his house and land. His father, Oliver Freeman, whom I well knew, and who dated his age with the last century, remembered both his grandfathers, who were officers in the army of Oliver Cromwell; and one of them named him after his former master.

What an air-drawn bubble is this freedom! how beautiful! how evanescent!

Like Shakspeare's lightning, gone, before we can say "Tis there." The moment after it was attained, was not Oliver Cromwell absolute monarch, under the name of Protector, and Napoleon Bonaparte, under that of First Consul; though the people were still amused with the sound, and knew not the bubble had burst? The one, knowing his people's attachment to liberty, contented himself with the power of a king, without daring to assume the name; and they thought they were free. The other, knowing his people's fondness for grandeur and shew, rose superior to kings in title, as in power; and they believed they rose with him.

LETTER V

TO MRS. BRUDENELL.

Oakwood.

GOING into the housekeeper's room the other day, I was struck with a small landscape, framed and glazed, which was cut in writing paper so exquisitely fine, that I could scarcely believe it in the power of scissars to execute it, or hands to guide them. The subject was the ruins of Palmyra, and the whole was surrounded by a border representing fine lace.

"Pray, Mrs. Simpson," said I, "who did this?"

"O, ma'am," she replied, "it's the handy-works of Peggy Freeman."

"Does she visit you sometimes?" I asked.

"Why, yes, ma'am, she does come now and then, with her mother and her aunt; but not very *oftens*. To be sure she's a very pretty sort of a girl, and very good-natured; but she's too high-flown for me. She's too fond of reading to be good for any thing. She has read all the books at the Parsonage over and over; and I believe, in my heart, that sooner than be without books, she'd make 'em herself. But it's her mother's fault, and so I told her. 'Here, Mrs. Freeman,' says I, 'you keep slave, slave, and let your daughter sit reading *the Pope*, and *the Four Seasons*, and *the Young Night Thoughts*, when she ought to be making a pudding, or sweeping up the

house!'—'Why,' says she, 'Mrs. Simpson,' says she, 'if my daughter likes to read, and I like to make a pudding and sweep the house, I think nobody can blame us for our separate employments.'—'Well,' says I, every one in his way: but I know if I'd a daughter, I'd make her good for something. Your hundred a year won't buy Peggy a gentleman, and all her learning won't cook her husband's dinner, nor her *ingenousness* mend his stockings.' Though, to be sure, ma'am, continued Mrs. Simpson, the neighbours do say that Mr. Nevil the curate is strangely smitten with her, and some people have taken it into their heads to fancy he might marry her; but he knows o' which side his bread is buttered; and he knows that reading books is of no use in a family, whatever it may be in the pulpit. Besides,

they say now he's for an apple off a higher bough."

This account of the housekeeper raised my curiosity to see Peggy Freeman, and I took my evening walk to the house. Jessamine and woodbine were climbing on each side the door, and a small flower-garden lay before it. I found the good mother knitting, the aunt at her spinning-wheel, and Peggy finishing a beautiful drawing of the Choice of Hercules. The firmness of her figure of Virtue, the fascination of Pleasure, and the beauty of both, astonished me; nor was the indecision of Hercules, or his muscular strength, less striking. Peggy received me with native ease and sweetness. Indeed my unexpected entrance caused no more confusion in the whole groupe, than that of my favourite spaniel.

The house was a pattern of neatness.

Its casements were adorned with white curtains, and its cherry-coloured floor partly covered with a carpet; the rest of the furniture had descended from father to son, with the house that contained it. The polished tables, chairs, and dresser were of massive oak; and over the latter were ranks of shining pewter, from the dish which held the Christmas beef, to the plate from which it was eaten. On one side of the fire-place stood a couch, called a squab; on the other, a heavy, immoveable oaken chair, capable of holding three persons, called a *lang-settle*, that is a long seat. The chimney corners were adorned with brazen tongs, fire shovel, and chaffing dish, and a pair of bellows mounted with the same metal.

I remarked to Mrs. Freeman the ancient furniture of her house, and told her with what care I should pre-

serve it. She said her husband valued it so highly, that he not only would not part with any of it, but that he would not suffer it to change its place; and she had had great difficulty to prevail upon him to let her take the wooden cradle up stairs, in which his ancestors, himself, and his daughter had been nursed; but that at last she had gained her point, and it was now in company with the cane chairs above.

During this latter part of the conversation, John entered, and bade his wife take me up stairs to see the cradle, which he assured me was a great curiosity. She knew this champion of freedom too well, to dispute the smallest of his commands, and led the way, while her daughter followed. The cradle was indeed curious; of pannelled oak, grown black with age,

ornamented with carving; and had a cross at the top, probably to secure its infant tenant from the influence of witchcraft or evil spirits, when they were in fashion. But the whole room was a curiosity. It was Peggy's. The blue and white striped linen curtains of the bed and window were the joint manufacture of the mother and aunt; every thing else shewed touches of her own hand. The walls she had herself painted light blue; but no more of them was seen above the chairs, than served for a ground-work to the innumerable drawings and landscapes of cut paper with which they were covered. The drawings were various. Landscapes, flowers, birds, and butterflies, in their native colours; and portraits in Indian ink, in which the fine touches of the pencil were such an exact copy of the strokes of the burin, that it re-

quired the nicest eye to distinguish the drawing from an engraving. The counterpane and cushions of the cane chairs were of white linen, with knots of flowers of her own quilting; the carpet, of canvas, covered with flowers of her own working; and artificial flowers of her own making ornamented the chimney-piece. Even the boxes were covered with writing paper, with small prints pasted on, and varnished over.

"Peggy," said I, astonished at what I saw, "is it posible all these are your performances?"

She replied, with great modesty, "I have a taste for these fanciful employments, ma'am; and my father and mother are so kind as to give me leisure to indulge it."

The mother shewed me Peggy's embroidery on muslin, and even her

darning of the family linen. "There is some charm in your fingers, certainly," said I; "I never saw any thing so exquisitely neat. The pencil, the scissars, and the needle acquire powers in your hands, of which I did not think them capable. The pencil and scissors I willingly cede to you: but you beat me on my own ground! I, who never saw any sort of needle-work which I did not learn; or practised any in which I did not excel!"

To complete your idea of Peggy Freeman, I must tell you that her person is tall and slender; her features are extremely pleasing, and though, perhaps, not regularly beautiful, inseparably connected with my ideas of beauty; and her complexion is the purest red and white, by

"Nature's own sweet and cunning hand laid on."

Her manner shews a consciousness that her own talents are an equivalent to the rank of those the world would call her superiors; but her self-confidence has no presumption. Her manners, indeed, bespeak a knowledge of the world, which neither intuition nor books could give. This she has acquired at the house of Mr. Caradine, a gentleman about twenty miles distant, whose daughter is her intimate friend.

Such is my neighbour. But she is something more than this, which I do not well know how to describe. Something which speaks to the heart, and which my heart tells me I could love. I promise myself great pleasure in her society.

LETTER VI.

TO MRS. BRUDENELL.

Oakwood.

My mornings are inviolably my own. This is one of my singularities. In the afternoon Margaret (Peggy now no more, for I like no Peggy but Allan Ramsay's) works or walks with me; and I have introduced her to our evening society, where my brother and her father, having read the news of the day, generally make some comments not much in its favour. On politics we are both silent; on other subjects we join as we please; and my brother acknowledges the pleasure he derives from female conversation.

My brother's temper is naturally violent. He loves and hates, and speaks, in extremes; and, by speaking only to inferiors, he has contracted some strong modes of expression, that would not pass current in the world. John Freeman is as positive as my brother is warm, and fears the 'squire no more than the 'squire does him. Hence, when they differ in opinion, a stranger would believe a quarrel must ensue, and they would part in anger, if not for ever. But, besides the regard which every body feels for my brother, who knows him thoroughly, they are held together by two of the strongest ties in the world, habit and self-interest. They have conversed so long, that each is become necessary to the other, and neither could find a substitute.

"Brother," said I, last night, "have

you Methodists in the village? I heard psalm singing just now, as I passed Webster's barn."

"I believe," replied he, "there is not a village in the kingdom without them. They swarm like gnats on a summer's evening. They wanted one of my coach-houses to preach in, but I would burn it first. I expect I shall not keep a servant in the house for them soon, for if ever they convert one, I discharge him directly."

"Why does their religion disqualify them for service?" demanded I.

"Because they are all rogues," he answered. "There is not one that would not pick your pocket: and though I cannot keep canting, lying, and cheating out of the village, I will not let them reside in my house, if I know it."

"You are very right," said I. "I

know little of the Methodists; and I did not know that dishonesty was one of the doctrines they teach."

"I suppose they do not teach it," replied my brother; "they only practise it."

"In that predicament, I imagine," said I, "stand all religions. All inculcate good; and so far as the professors of any commit evil, they depart from their own faith. That the Methodists, pretending to more sanctity than their fellow-christians, and possessing no more virtue, are wider from their professions than others, I can easily believe; but, surely, that is all."

"No," said my brother, "it is not all. They were originally, as themselves confess, the vilest of sinners, and so they are still. Can the impression made by the rant of an enthusiast be lasting? Can it change the nature

of an ignorant blockhead? If it restrain the tongue of a prophane swearer, will not the evil principle come out in the shape of a lie?"

"If I grant you that Methodists before their conversion were the vilest of sinners," said I, "the result will be much in their favour; for they are now decent, orderly members of society. If they have banished swearing, drinking, and debauchery, we may forgive them a little hypocrisy. The manners of all are improved, and unquestionably the morals of many."

"Well, I will not involve all in a general censure, then," rejoined my brother; "but I believe their religion, like that of the Pharisees of old, corrects manners rather than morals."

"They affect simplicity of dress," said Margaret, "and I have known a female Methodist take more time and

pains in starching a cap border, than I do in curling my hair."

"Besides," said my brother, "their ignorance is unpardonable. I stopped a moment at Webster's barn-door the other night, and heard a black-handed blue coated fellow reading scripture in a manner that would have made your hair stand on end, and saying that all the great guns of heaven were charged up to their muzzles, and would shortly be fired off by the angel Gabriel against the devil's heir at law, Napoleon Bonaparte."

"And I," said John Freeman," "made one of the congregation a few evenings ago, when the preacher cried, looking round on the assembly, *St. Paul says, 'I can do all things!'* He laid down his Bible, with an air of incredulity; and shaking his head, repeated, *St. Paul says, he can do all things! I'll*

lay him half a crown of that. And taking a half-crown piece out of his pocket, he produced it to his hearers."

"Aye," interrupted my brother, "he had studied this brilliant flower of rhetoric, and borrowed the half-crown for the purpose."

"Very likely, sir," resumed John. "But, after a pause, finding St. Paul did not come forward and accept his wager, he cried *Hold! let us first be sure!* And taking up his Bible, he read, '*I can do all things — by the help of Christ.*' *O,* says he, *that's another affair. Ill not lay against that;* and put his half-crown again into his pocket."

"This is vulgarity bordering upon prophaneness," said I; "but it is calculated to arrest the attention of the multitude; and probably, in the course

of the evening, they might hear something better. Had this man, like St. Paul himself, *reasoned of righteousness, temperance, and judgment to come,* his sermon had passed unheeded, and the next night of his preaching, his congregation would have met at the ale-house or at foot-ball."

"I should think," said Margaret, "it must be difficult for farmers servants and labourers to be awake to the exhortations of the preacher, notwithstanding the variety they contain. Ale and foot-ball are more powerful stimulants than eloquence, and either might for a time make them forget the fatigue of the day."

"You know not the power of that eloquence which ranges from everlasting happiness to a potatoe, and comprises every tone, from a whisper

to a roar," said my brother; "however, I suppose the auditors do sleep sometimes."

"I was a witness of it the other night," said John Freeman; "and the orator was very civil upon the occasion; for, fixing his eyes upon the roof of the barn, he cried, 'Sinner! awake! I will not expose thee by pointing thee out to the congregation; but I will stop a few minutes to give thee time to rouse thyself."

"An infallible method to awake either saint or sinner," said my brother; "for if you read till a man fall asleep, he awakes when the voice ceases: and as sure a method to engage the attention of the congregation; for each would be looking round for the sleeper. I have been told, however, that the methodist preachers have more ways than one of awakening

sinners, and that one of them threw his Bible at the head of a sleeping man, saying, "If you will not *hear* the word of God, you shall *feel* it."

"Men go to church," said I, "to be gravely taught, or severely reprehended; neither of which is very pleasant. But it is very pleasant to be amused; and doubly so, under the idea of performing the duties of religion. I have no doubt that Wesley, the great apostle of the methodists, was sensible of this; and intermixed anecdotes and familiar sayings in his discourses, as other itinerants hang up the figures of wild beasts, to draw company: and it has frequently happened that some expression has struck the sinner with conviction or remorse, and made a convert of him, when he only went to see the show."

"If the methodists taught men

their duty by way of amusement," said my brother, "it would be an improvement on the ivory letters and dissected maps of children. But they send them to the lowest pit of hell, by their own authority, and terrify them out of the little reason they ever had to guide them!"

"Some farce and some tragedy, brother," said I: "if amusement bring them together, terror holds them. The grand secret is to let neither predominate too much."

The clock now struck eleven, which was our signal to retire. John Freeman took home his daughter; and my brother, shaking me heartily by the hand, bade me good night.

JANE OAKWOOD.

LETTER VII.

TO MISS CARADINE, OATLEY MANOR.

You have often rallied me, my dear Maria, on the attentions of Mr. Nevil, but as they were confined to the supplying me with books, and the improvement of my small stock of knowledge, I could not admit your surmises. What could be more natural than that a man of sense and learning, at a distance from every human being acquainted with books or qualified for conversation, except Mr. Oakwood, my father, and myself, and forbidden the society of the former, should seek refuge at our cottage? Was it not also

natural that when he saw my passion for reading, he should furnish me with the means to gratify it, and that when the same topics were common to us both, and to no other person within his reach, he should seek my society? Mr. Nevil and myself have, in the course of our reading, admired the same beauties, and condemned the same faults; and if both our judgments were tolerably correct, it could not have been otherwise. Where our tastes have differed, I have endeavoured to think like Mr. Nevil; and where I could not change my opinion, he has sometimes doubted his own.

You laugh at my *natural* history, and you tell me that Mr. Nevil, being twenty-five years of age, and myself nineteen, the *natural* consequence was, that he should become my lover. You even now believe that I have made the

discovery, and that what I have said is the prelude to my communicating it to you. Indeed you believe too much. I am only going to tell you that the behaviour of Mr. Nevil is inexplicable; and that if I were to describe his manners of yesterday, it would give you no certain idea of those of to-day. He approaches me with an air of coldness, almost of reluctance; he sits silent and abstracted, and walks out of the house without taking leave. The following day his visit commences in the same manner; something accidentally leads to conversation; he becomes animated and interesting; and leaves me abruptly. The third day he does not visit me; if he see me walking, he strikes into another path; and if he think I have finished reading one of his books, he sends, instead of bringing me another.

Is Mr. Nevil afraid I should like him too well? Not satisfied with his friendship, does he think I aspire to his love? And does he kindly assume repulsive manners at some times, lest I should be betrayed into unrequited fondness by his attention at others? In person, as in mind, Mr. Nevil is greatly superior to any man I have seen; and perhaps I might love him, if he seriously sought my regard; but I believe I do not already love him, and that if I did, I should not allow my affection to annoy him. The humility becoming my inferior station, I trust, will not forsake me; but I own I feel offended at his capricious behaviour.

From this ungrateful subject I turn to one which affords me real pleasure. Mrs. Oakwood, Mr. Oakwood's sister, has been some time at the Hall, and having accidentally seen one of my

landscapes in cut paper in the housekeeper's room, she was so pleased with it that she honoured me with a visit.

Mrs. Oakwood is an old maid; an appellation which is considered so much like a term of reproach, that I have observed people of good breeding avoid making use of it. Why should this be? If a woman live single from necessity, it is possible she may deserve our pity, but she cannot our contempt; if from choice, she cannot be the object of either. Having no one's taste or temper to consult but her own, she may contract some peculiarities; but they cannot generally be so ridiculous as to render her a proper object of derision. She has fewer virtues to exercise than a married woman; she cannot make a good wife or a good mother; she is not called upon to "love, honour, and obey" a husband,

or "to train up children in the way they should go;" but she may be a dutiful daughter, an affectionate sister, a faithful friend, and an indulgent mistress; and are not these relations to our fellow-creatures sufficient to constitute a respectable woman? Such Mrs. Oakwood ever has been, and still is. She has never been handsome, but her person is yet elegant; and good sense and good nature are so strongly depicted in her countenance, that they cannot be mistaken. I love her, and every one does so that comes within the sphere of her attraction.

Till my acquaintance with this lady, my visits to the hall were confined to the housekeeper's room; except when Mrs. Simpson, in the absence of her master, chose to make a display of the wonders of her empire, and her art of governing, by leading me through the

stately apartments. As my notions on this subject rise no higher than neatness and comfort accompanied by a little taste, my admiration was soon over; and as Mrs. Simpson's ideas, though extremely correct within her own dominions, seldom wander out of them, it was not the wish of either that my visits should be frequent. But Mrs. Oakwood has opened a new field for me. She has introduced me into the room in which Mr. Oakwood passes his evenings, where I join the conversation, and form one of the party. An evening party composed of four persons! An old bachelor, an old maid, an old farmer, and a young girl, who has scarcely been out of her native dale, except to the nearest market-town, and to the house of her dear Maria! Let, however, the scoffers be silent. We have neither cards

nor music, it is true; nor have we any lofty flights of imagination; but our conversation never degenerates below plain good sense.

Ever yours,

MARGARET FREEMAN.

LETTER VIII.

TO MISS CARADINE, OATLEY MANOR,

MY DEAR MARIA,

THE enigmatical behaviour of Mr. Nevil is now explained, and I hasten to give you the solution. To-day he brought me Rousseau's Eloisa; "Read that, Margaret," said he, "and tell me what you think of it."

"I do not know whether I dare read it," replied I, after having opened the book; "for the author himself represents it as dangerous."

"Nothing can be dangerous to you," said Mr. Nevil, "who know not what love is——But tell me whether

you believe it possible to devote your whole soul to one person, and afterwards be happy with another?"

"I should dread the trial," replied I;—"but your question requires some explanation. Am I to suppose the object of my affection to be deserving, or unworthy of my regard?"

"Deserving as an angel."

"That term is generally applied to females; but there may be angels of the other sex."

"Undoubtedly there are," said Mr. Nevil, with a look of some perplexity. "Don't you know that Belzebub was a fallen angel?"

"Is the supposed object of my love to resemble Belzebub?"

"Belzebub! She is the most perfect of her sex! She is all beauty, elegance, and sweetness! heavenly both in mind and person!"

"I am afraid I could never have a lover of that description. Would you have me imagine him a celestial female?"

"I don't know what I would have, or what I say—I cannot express myself clearly—My meaning is to know whether you think it possible for man—or woman (which is the same thing) to sacrifice the most tender passion for one object, and retain any hope of happiness with another, who is perfectly indifferent to him—I mean to her."

I ceased to correct Mr. Nevil.

"Nothing can exceed my inexperience in such a matter," replied I; "but let me ask what motive could be sufficiently powerful to demand this sacrifice?"

"A motive worthy of Belzebub himself—the love of money?"

"I believe then that money could

not counterbalance the loss of a beloved person."

"Oh! I believe so from my soul," said Mr. Nevil. "But there is a demon more unrelenting than even Mammon; more inexorable in his demands upon mortals—I mean the pride of family—How would you satisfy this monster?"

"I cannot answer such extraordinary questions," said I. "You forget that you are demanding them of one whose situation in life excludes her from every degree of pride of that sort. My ancestors had nothing to boast, unless honesty were a subject for it. The rabble of Jack Straw might take for their motto,

"When Adam delv'd and Eve span,
Who was then a gentleman?"

but it has been said that no one ever despised the advantages of birth but

those who did not possess them. If they were mine, I think I should not despise them."

"How reasonable! how candid!" exclaimed Mr. Nevil. "You will not allow me the satisfaction of once thinking you in the wrong! You will not give me a chance of quarrelling with you, by uttering one absurdity!"

"Why do you desire to think meanly of me, sir? or why would you seek a pretence to quarrel with me? Bestow upon me only that share of your good opinion which your judgment may tell you that I merit, and which therefore you cannot withhold; but do not seek an occasion to quarrel with the young woman you have condescended to instruct, and who, if the testimony of her own conscience may be trusted, has given you no cause of offence. Go, sir, withdraw your communications,

and retain your books; and if you wish to see me no more, do not imagine that a quarrel is necessary to our separation."

"I thank you, Margaret," said Mr. Nevil, solemnly, "for having uttered a word I could not articulate. I must indeed see you no more, at least at present; but I shall attach your image to every book we have perused together, and look back upon the hours I have passed in your society as an enchanting vision, while those present will be a painful reality. I have sat with you for hours, endeavouring to summon resolution enough to make the declaration I am now going to make; but I always deferred the dreadful task till the morrow. It now shocks my soul, and it will be so revolting to you, that you would banish me from your presence, if I could form a design to enter

it: yet cannot I quit you—quit you for ever, without acquainting you with the state of my heart. I love you, Margaret, love you almost to distraction; yet I am going to marry another."

Mr. Nevil's emotion here stopped his voice; and if my looks were faithful to my feelings, they must have been expressive of astonishment and horror. After some moments he continued, "I have neither fortune nor expectations. How could I ask you to become the wife of a curate in an obscure village? or how could I submit to remain in such a situation myself? But the other obstacle I mentioned is yet more invincible—Will you pardon me if I again name it? My family has stood near the throne for ages: it has even made and unmade kings: some of its onours and possessions remain,

though neither have descended to me; but tell me, could I marry the daughter of a simple yeoman, however deserving and accomplished?"

Mr. Nevil again paused, but I was silent, and he proceeded. "Dear Margaret, forgive me for such unheard of presumption; but my emotions must for once have vent, and my wayward behaviour must be explained. For some time, your modesty, your ingenuousness, your talents, and your progress in literature, gave me pleasure without alloy. By degrees I found that my pleasure was incompatible with my circumstances; but I was so situated that I could not detach myself from your society. I have struggled with my passion, and I have appeared rude and unfeeling; I have yielded to it, in spite of every effort; and you must have thought me inconsistent, if not

insane. It is over. A woman of family and fortune has found means to make me understand that I might prove acceptable to her; she has bestowed upon me her heart, and indirectly offered me her hand. You cannot but know to whom I allude; as, unfortunately, the lady herself has made no secret of the partiality with which she honours me."

"If," said I, "I were required to name the woman who favoured you with a preference, it might be difficult to fix upon the right; but there can be only one who would make you acquainted with her sentiments. Miss Lovewell might think her immense fortune justified such a step."

Mr. Nevil sighed deeply. "I am bound to Miss Lovewell by gratitude," said he, "and that, I hope, will secure her happiness—As to my own! I know she has neither beauty nor good sense,

and I fear she is deficient in good temper; and if you are capable of wishing me miserable, you will probably be gratified."

"I am not," said I. "You have my thanks for the past, and my best wishes for the future. May no remembrance of me contribute to your unhappiness!"

"This is too much!" exclaimed Mr. Nevil. "I cannot bear it!" He then snatched up his hat and rushed out of the house.

You know that Lovewell Hall is about ten miles below Oakwood, and that the late Sir Everard Lovewell never resided there; but I think I have not informed you, that about four months ago, intelligence arrived that his daughter and sole heiress was coming to the mansion. The news ran through the dale like a torrent. Nobody had

seen Miss Lovewell, and every body was employed in conjecturing what sort of a person she might be. She was supposed to be tall and short, handsome and plain, affable and proud; and the principal topic of discussion among the poor was, whether she were greedy or charitable. The Sunday after the lady's arrival, the church at Lovewell was crowded to excess; Miss Lovewell entered the family pew, accompanied by a widow lady, her companion; and it was then ascertained that she was a little thin woman, with a pale brown complexion, a sharp nose, and fine black eyes.

Every person entitled to that honour claimed the acquaintance of Miss Lovewell; and after they had all been received at her house, it was universally allowed that she was the sweetest woman in the world. Her person was

so elegant, her manners were so polite, and her dress was so beautiful! The ladies carried away every particle of her attire that their memories could retain, and set their maids and milliners to imitate it.

Among the visitors of Miss Lovewell, Mr Nevil was particularly distinguished. She attended the service at Oakwood, in preference to that at her parish church; and, on such occasions, she took back the curate in the coach, with herself and her companion, to dinner. The companion delighted in enumerating the titled and wealthy lovers whom her dear Miss Lovewell had rejected, and always concluded by saying, she was quite positive that nothing but merit could ever prevail. Such circumstances as these soon turned the conversation of the dale from the beauties of Miss Lovewell and her

dress, to the prospect of Mr. Nevil's good fortune; the rich believed he would be a happy man, and the poor, a great man; I believed that if common fame were not, as she is represented, a great story-teller, she was at least a great magnifier; but the extraordinary confession Mr. Nevil thought it necessary to make, proves that she has for once adhered to the truth.

The companion of Miss Lovewell has told several persons, in confidence, that the lady is twenty-nine years of age: my father's chronology is too hard for her; for he adds nine to the number. We keep this secret, however, within our own family.

May Mr. Nevil be happy with the woman he has chosen; and I am happy that my heart had no interest in his choice.

Yours, most truly,
MARGARET FREEMAN.

LETTER. IX.

TO MISS CARADINE, OATLEY MANOR.

I HAVE another stranger to introduce to you, my dear Maria. One dark and rainy evening, as we were sitting around our fire, the latch of the door was lifted up, and a gentleman entered our cottage. He seemed about twenty-six or twenty-seven years of age; he was tall and well made, his face handsome, and his manner interesting.

"Sir," said the stranger, addressing himself to my father, "I have lost my way; can you have the goodness to tell me if there is any inn near, where I may pass the night?"

"There is a public-house in the village," replied my father; "but it is half a mile distant, and you would be very ill accommodated there. I have a spare bed for a friend; the stranger is my friend; and I think you had better sleep here."

The gentleman thanked my father, and sat down: our supper remained on the table; the gentleman began to eat; and my father having placed a cup of his mild ale at his elbow, said, "I do not so much wonder that you lost your way such a night as this, as that you found your way hither; for we are remote from the great road, and, if you come from the south, the river is between that and our village."

"It is," said the stranger; "and it was my surprise at seeing such a river without a bridge, that made me discover I had quitted the road."

"And how did you get over the river?" said my father.

"I went a considerable way up its banks," answered the stranger; "and where I found it the broadest I knew it must be the shallowest; and there I ventured to cross it."

"You must have pulled off your boots then, and slung them over your shoulder," said my father, casting his eyes upon the boots, and observing that they did not appear to be soaked with water.

"I am certain I did not pull off my boots," replied the stranger; "nor could I have any motive for doing so; for I believe the water was very little higher than my horse's knees."

"I beg your pardon," said my father; "as I saw no whip in your hand, I thought you had been walking. I am told that it is the fashion for gentlemen to walk journeys and run races, instead

of fatiguing their horses; and that a pair of boots are no more a sign of a man's having been on horseback, than a black coat is a sign of a clergyman. But pray, sir, if it be not impertinent, what have you done with your horse?"

"I have forgotten him," said the stranger, hastily laying down his knife and fork; "and if he can forgive me, I never can forgive myself! The poor animal stands on the outside of your gate; and your unexpected hospitality made me totally neglect him; but I must decline any further acceptance of it, if you cannot have the goodness to lodge him as well as myself. As to my whip, I declare I never thought of it; but, as you justly observe, it is not here; and as I do not recollect having used it on the road, I believe I must have left it at the inn where I dined."

My mother and I smiled at each other; and each, in her own mind, applied our country saying to the stranger, *He would have lost his head, if it had been loose.*

"As you probably dined at the distance of only one stage from hence," said my father, "if I knew the name of the place, and the sign of the inn, I might be able to recover the whip, by means of one of my neighbours."

"I do not know the name of the town," said the stranger. "I never asked it, nor did I ever hear it. As to the inn, I believe it was the Red Lion —or, indeed, the Angel—I cannot be certain which of the two, for I have stopped at both on my way. I am clear that I dined; for I remember that I was going to cut my meat with my fork. I do not recollect, however, whether I paid my bill—but I must have paid it;

for the waiter and hostler both attended me at the door; and they were the persons to have reminded me of such an omission."

"The whip is gone for ever," said my father.

"I fear it is," rejoined the stranger; "for, to confess the truth, I was so occupied in analysing the motives of the person at whose request I was prevailed upon to undertake this journey, and in inquiring into the probable result of it, that I was inattentive to those trifles, which, though seemingly beneath the dignity of man, are essential to his welfare."

My father then committed the horse to the care of our neighbour, and returned to have half an hour's conversation with his guest, before he went to the Hall, where he scarcely would have omitted going, had his hero, Oliver

Cromwell, arisen from the shades to visit him.

"Sir," said my father, entering, "your horse has lost a shoe."

"Perhaps," said the gentleman, "you have a blacksmith in your village, who can supply its place to-morrow morning?"

"Yes," replied my father, "we have;" and seating himself, added, "it is a pity that such a useful and noble animal as the horse should be trusted in the hands of such unskilful blockheads. Pray, sir, do you think the Romans shod their horses?"

The gentleman looked surprised. "Why, sir," said he, "I have not attended to the subject of horse's shoes; but I am of opinion that they did not shoe them in the manner we do; for what remains of the Appian way is so

smooth, that a horse shod like ours could not have kept his feet upon it."

"I always thought the Romans were a wiser people than ourselves," exclaimed my father. "It seems they had one way less of tormenting horses. But pray, sir, have you seen the Appian way?"

"No," replied the gentleman, "it has always been the first wish of my heart to visit Italy, and comtemplate the magnificent ruins of ancient Rome, the mistress of the world; I cannot think of them without enthusiam; but I never had the opportunity."

"We have Roman roads here in England," said my father, "but I have never seen one."

"The roads made by the Romans in Britain, a remote conquered province," rejoined the stranger, "were far inferior to those they had near

the seat of empire; but even those would have endured to eternity, if they had been spared by the mattock and the plough. You have a fine specimen of a small one in your own county, in perfect preservation, about five miles on this side of Doncaster. It is now covered with turf, but is exactly in the form the Romans left it; flat at top, and sloping down steep on each side; and appears to have been made only of the common limestone and gravel of the country, without any cement."

"If I was ten years younger," cried my father, "I would walk on foot to see it."

"It would repay your pains," said the gentleman. "I thought myself fortunate in having it pointed out to me. And about three miles on this side you would meet with a still higher gratification; for the same road appears

again, and you may trace it all along the western boundary of the common called Barnsdale. But I fear the intended new road to Pontefract and Leeds will destroy it."

"Then the projectors of it ought to be fined and imprisoned," exclaimed my father. "They may destroy; but could they make such roads? Roads to last seventeen hundred years. Here, again, the Romans were wiser than we are. In time of peace their conquering legions were set to work. They made their soldiers useful. They employed them in making these everlasting roads, from one end of the kingdom to the other. Is it not a shame, sir, that the finest, stoutest young men should be called from among us, and be maintained for cleaning their own waistcoats and breeches; and those that ride, for looking after their own horses?

They are drones in the hive, who ought to be the best labourers; and we, the poor bees, after toiling for them, must have our wings clipped into the bargain!"

"I am of your opinion," replied the gentleman, "that soldiers ought to work. It has been objected that labour is incompatible with the military spirit; but I cannot be convinced that employment would hurt the spirit of a soldier more than inactivity; or that idleness is the proper school to prepare him for hard service. As to the Roman roads, they were certainly constructed for greater durability than ours: but it ought to be taken into consideration, that they had not heavy loaded waggons continually passing over them; weights which, perhaps, even they would not have been able to withstand."

A servant then entered from the Hall. We had trespassed half an hour; and my father's punctuality having never varied five minutes in fifteen years, Mr. Oakwood had sent to know if any thing were amiss. We departed with the servant; leaving to my mother and aunt the care of waiting on the stranger, and making his bed.

Next morning the gentleman breakfasted with us, of course. At breakfast my father asked him to dine, and at dinner to stay all night. At Mr. Oakwood's request he was introduced at the Hall; and we find him such a valuable acquisition to our society, that we do not repeat our invitations, for fear they should remind him of going; and he, satisfied that he is a welcome guest, forgets his intended journey, as he forgot his whip, or is afraid to introduce any thing that may lead to his

departure. He has been here a week.

My mother makes no alteration in our little table on this gentleman's account. He looks upon eating and drinking as the tenure by which he holds his being, the tax he pays to live; but he despises all idea of their being a gratification. His name is Millichamp. He has a small paternal estate in Kent; but I believe he has great expectations from his mother's brother, a rich cotton manufacturer in the neighbourhood of Manchester.

Such, my dear Maria, is our new acquaintance; I think I may say, friend; for though friendship may be in general a plant of slow growth, it has here met with such a congenial soil, that it has shot up with rapidity. We cannot be deceived in the man; for his

countenance sometimes smiles with the benevolence of a good heart, and sometimes glows with the dignity of a great mind, in a manner which words cannot describe, and art could not imitate.

Ever yours,

MARGARET FREEMAN.

LETTER X.

TO MRS. BRUDENELL.

Oakwood.

I have nothing to offer you, my dear friend, except the fire-side pictures at this place; but we have another figure in the groupe not unworthy of your notice, a Mr. Millichamp, whom chance and a dark rainy night sent to John Freeman's door, to beg a lodging. He is a young man, of appearance and manners extremely prepossessing; circumstances which I will not forget in announcing him, though you and I are no longer young women for these make a favourable impression upon all women. Mr. Millichamp is

the son of a clergyman in the south, and was himself educated and intended for a clergyman; but, declining the profession, he now resides with a rich manufacturer, his uncle.

If being an oddity is a requisite qualification for the society at Oakwood Hall, Mr. Millichamp bears his testimonials about him. To the most profound erudition; to a thorough knowledge of the Hebrew, Greek, Latin, French, and Italian languages; he joins the dignity of a philosopher, the modesty of a maiden, the simplicity of a child, and the forgetfulness of parson Adams.

Mr. Millichamp likes his quarters at John Freeman's so well, and they are so pleased with their guest, that there is a tacit agreement between them to avoid all subjects which might lead to a separation. He attends the father

and daughter here every night, and we find as little pleasure as they in anticipating his departure.

"Sir," said John Freeman to Millichamp last night, "when you first came to our house, and I found you had forgotten your whip and your horse, I had a great mind to have asked you where you had left your spurs; for I observed you had not them on."

"It would have been a natural question," said Millichamp; "but I never wear spurs, for two reasons. The first is, I had rather be run away with by my own thoughts than by my horse; and, if I wore spurs, one would be the inevitable consequence of the other; for I should stick them into his sides inadvertently, while I was thinking of something else. The other is, I have doubts in my own mind of the pro-

priety of wounding a poor animal, because he does not go exactly the pace I wish him to go."

"I honour your doubts," said my brother. "I wear spurs, because I have no reveries; but I never let them touch my horse. For my own part, I think we shall be answerable hereafter for our inhumanity to brutes. As they are treated, they ought to be made of wood and wire. Indeed, if they were, men would be more careful not to knock the machine to pieces, than they are as it is made of flesh and blood."

"Possibly," said Millichamp, "we may be the beasts of burthen in the next world, and our horses may ride us."

"I am prepared for that," rejoined my brother. "There is not one of my horses that will not make me a good master. I must own, that when I was

young, I did amuse myself sometimes with docking, nicking, and cropping them; and I have run them too far after a fox; but I have asked their pardon long ago; and I never killed or maimed a horse in my life. I never breed my own horses; because if a colt did not turn out well, I could not bear to consign him to the flagellation of a two-legged brute. I never buy a horse without inquiring into his character as particularly as I would into that of a coachman; for I trust my neck in the care of both; and I never sell one. When a horse is grown old in my service, his place is a sinecure; and when life is no longer an enjoyment, I have him shot, and buried in his skin and shoes. I have a cemetery on purpose for horses."

"I once broke a horse myself," said Millichamp. "What an idea does this

word *broke* convey?" cried he, interrupting himself: "in its literal meaning, that of tearing the animal to pieces; in its common acceptation here, only breaking his spirit.—I conceived that they who make it a trade proceeded not only upon a cruel, but upon a mistaken principle. I trained my horse from a colt; I accustomed him to expressions of kindness; when I began to ride him, he had never seen a whip. I did not then use one; I only made him sensible of his errors by the alteration in my tone of voice; and he had such a love of my friendship, and such a fear of my displeasure, that he became perfectly obedient."

"I should wish every servant of mine, whether on two legs or four," said my brother, "to be actuated by both these motives. Love alone is not strong enough to secure obedience;

and I would shoot myself rather than live only to be feared. But your method of training a horse would not be generally practicable. It requires a personal acquaintance with him that no horse-breaker could have with every animal that passes through his hands; and, in such a long course of education, if time were allowed, patience would sometimes be wanting in the preceptor."

"The time it would demand," rejoined Millichamp, "is an objection I cannot answer; but if patience only were wanting, it would be the fault of the man, not the method. The best systems of education for our own species require uninterrupted patience."

"Besides," said my brother, "I should doubt whether the fear of his master's displeasure would be strong enough always to restrain a horse, if

that of corporeal punishment were unknown. It might sufficiently influence your groom; because it would include the fear of losing his place, and getting a worse. But the tempers of horses differ, as well as those of men; some require greater severity than others; and yours might be of a gentle disposition."

"He was," said Millichamp; "and, while he was in possession of himself, needed no other incitement or curb than my orders. But I shall not conceal from you, that turning a corner suddenly one day, when the whole earth was one uniform picture of snow, and seeing a woman in a large, bright, scarlet cloak, he refused to pass her. For the first time I struck him with the whip. He was ignorant of its meaning, and, instead of using all his legs, found only the two hind ones. He

kicked, and threw me. Had he had a previous knowledge of the smart, his fear of that might have been stronger than of the scarlet cloak, and impelled him to pass it. I do not mean, therefore, to recommend my method of training horses; but I think a great deal of it might, with advantage, be incorporated into a little of the old; and in that I am certain you will be of my opinion.

"And I too," said I. "I believe it is undiscovered how far the intelligence between men and horses might be carried; except Gulliver discovered it, who kept no other company. I had a noble beast, and I gave a sigh to his memory; so beautiful, that I was bidden to name my own price, if I would have sold him; but money could not come in competition with him. He carried me on a pillion seven years.

In my airings, when he reached any place where he had been accustomed to turn back, and, by a little shuffling, indicated his wish to do so, the servant who rode before me, and who had long been intimate with him, would say, in a tone of common conversation, as if he had been answering one of his own species, 'No, not yet.' The creature submitted, and went on. When we arrived at a place where I chose to turn again, the man would say, in the same unmarked tone, 'Now you may turn back, if you will;' and the horse instantly availed himself of the permission. I have travelled journies of three or four hundred miles on his back; and, as I thought saddle and pillion, with their respective burthens, too heavy a load to go safely down a steep hill, I always walked down myself. At the top of such he would, of

his own accord, set himself across the road, that he might stand steady, while the man dismounted, and lifted me off: and if it were a short hill, and I chose to keep my seat, on the man's saying, 'No, not this hill,' he would go on. I once had him with me at a sea-bathing place. I rode on the sands regularly every day, and, when my airing was finished, I always got off at a particular spot, and walked to my lodgings: the servant then flung the bridle over the horse's neck, and the horse followed him to his stable. It happened one day that, attracted by some beautiful sea weeds, I alighted before I came to the usual place. The man led the way towards the stable, expecting the horse to follow; but though the animal cast a wishful look towards his keeper, as he receded from him, he would not leave his mistress, believing

he had not yet discharged his duty. The man called him; the horse hesitated; and, finding I did not oppose it, inclination prevailed; he trotted off, at a great rate, till he overtook his conductor, and then followed him quietly to his rack and manger."

"And what became of him at last?" said Margaret.

"I kept him two years after he was unable to work," replied I, "and in that time he never lay down. Towards the last, he grew so weak that he fell, when asleep, and could not get up again, without the assistance of two men. Having done so several times, a kind friend took the opportunity of my absence, to order him to be shot; and he lies buried in my garden."

"And what did you say to it?" asked Margaret.

"I thanked my friend very sincerely, and shed bitter tears over my horse."

LETTER XI.

TO MISS CARADINE.

Oakwood.

My dear Maria, your letter has overwhelmed me with astonishment and confusion. Though I was not ignorant of Mr. Caradine's design to satisfy his principal creditor by the sacrifice of his daughter, how could I imagine that our interesting wanderer was destined to receive the prize? Why, Maria, did you suffer three weeks to elapse since my last letter, before you informed me that he was on his way to you, when our cottage arrested his steps? Do you think that I — that is, we — surely I shall not speak like

Mr. Nevil—do you think that we would have detained the loiterer here, if we had known his errand? I assure you I did not detain him; my father and mother, Mr. and Mrs. Oakwood, every one dreaded his departure.

What will become of Mr. Marriot? Not discouraged by Mr. Caradine, allowed to hope by yourself, absent, and his treasure given to another! How will he bear the unexpected stroke! Your spirit, my dear Maria, would not have yielded to compulsion or intreaty on so unreasonable a requisition as that of marrying a man you did not love, to redeem the mortgage on your father's estate; but you will love Millichamp; you have only to become acquainted with him, to render persuasion unnecessary. He will prevail, and Marriot will be wretched and forgotten.

When I had read your letter till I could no longer distinguish the characters, I considered what course I had to take, and I believed I ought to make Millichamp acquainted with its contents. I accordingly took my needlework into the garden, and sitting down in my rustic hut, where he had often joined me, I awaited his coming. He soon entered the garden, and seeing me, advanced towards the hut. I was greatly agitated, and being unable to speak, as he came into the hut, I pointed to the bench beside me.

"Has any thing alarmed you, Margaret?" said Millichamp.

"No," replied I, recovering myself; "but I fear we have all committed a great error in wishing to detain you here. You would be much surprised if I were to tell you that I know the object of your visit to this part of the country."

The agitation was now his own. He turned pale, and with some difficulty articulated, "I should, indeed."

"Miss Caradine," resumed I, "is my dearest friend. Deprived of her mother when an infant, she was nursed in this village by a farmer's wife who had been her mother's maid; and she remained here till the fondness that united us as children and playfellows had grown into a friendship which survived our separation. Laying aside the superiority of her birth and station, Miss Caradine has considered me as her equal. I have been her frequent visitor, and am her constant correspondent."

"Ah! she is then an estimable woman," exclaimed Millichamp.

Without noticing this remark, I continued. "Among the few topics of epistolary conversation which this

neighbourhood affords, it was impossible to forget the chance which favoured us with your society, and the pleasure we derived from it; and the answer to this, which I have received this morning, informs me that you have been some time expected at Mr. Caradine's house."

"What, then, must you think of me?"

"I think," said I, smiling, "that you take time for deliberation."

"Margaret," said Millichamp, "I value your good opinion so highly, that I will not forfeit it without some explanation. I will, with your permission, tell you what I am, and how I am situated with respect to Miss Caradine.

"My paternal estate is only two hundred pounds a year. My father, as you already know, was a clergyman, and educated me for the same profes-

sion. He hoped I might succeed him in his preferment; but he died before I had taken orders, and his living was given to another. I had no particular inclination for the church; indeed my mind revolted against the idea of being chained down to repeat a certain number of words, however admirable, at stated hours; and knowing that my income would satisfy my present wants, I left the university, and pursued my studies and inquiries without a plan.

"In these studies I might perhaps have grown old without perceiving it, had not my uncle roused me. He had no child. He said, he should consider the son of his sister as his own; he should experience the pleasures of a parent in my society; I should be the comfort of his declining years; and the inheritor of his fortune. Such were the lures held out, to tempt me to

sacrifice my independence,—the great privilege which gives to man the disposal of his own time, and the regulation *of* his own actions; and they succeeded; though, if I know my own heart, the last motive was the least.

"I came to reside with my uncle; I gave up one habit or opinion from duty, another from gratitude, another from the love of peace; none from self-interest. In the mean time, reiterated demands on my uncle's part, and concessions on mine, have erected him into a tyrant, and degraded me into a slave. His last request was, that I should marry Miss Caradine, the heiress of her father's estate, which is mortgaged to my uncle for half its value.

"'I am a sort of *Carlos* in 'Love makes a Man.' Books have been my delight. I have regarded your sex,

Margaret, as the most beautiful part of the works of the Creator; but I had no more personal interest in it than in the lily or the rose. I knew neither the kind of love, nor the degree, which was necessary to secure my own felicity, or that of the woman I should vow to cherish. My mind then, with respect to woman, a sheet of blank paper, might as well receive the impression of Miss Caradine as of any other; and I set out for her father's mansion, in conformity to my uncle's desire, earnestly wishing I might like the lady, but determined not to impose upon either her or him for a moment, if I did not. Why I came here, you know," continued Millichamp, with some hesitation; "but why I have remained here so long, I scarcely know myself.—I have been happy—and voluntarily to deprive myself of happiness required

more resolution than I possess—indeed, I was not certain that a lady whom I had never seen had a right to exact such a sacrifice."

Millichamp might have talked till to-morrow, and have met with no interruption from me. Here, however, he paused, and I ventured to say, "She could have no such right; but you have invested your uncle with the authority of a parent, and perhaps you ought to be directed by him."

"Never," he replied with energy; "never can one human being have a right to direct the actions of another! Even a state of servitude does not confer it, farther than the actions of the servant regard the master; and as to slavery, it is a monster of man's own making!"

"But suppose the lady has expected you," said I.

"If the lady have expected me, I am indeed to blame; but surely it was indelicate, if she were informed of my purpose as well as my visit. Do not you think we should have seen each other first, and I have been spared the mortification of being known to reject the lady if I could not love her?"

You could not expect delicacy from a man who has passed his life with horses and dogs, and who has contracted to pay his debts with the hand of his daughter; but, as things are circumstanced, no mischief can ensue. Though our acquaintance with you is of recent date, the unreserved domestic intercourse we have had with you has enabled us to discover your worth; and as to the idea of rejecting Maria Caradine, it could only enter the breast of a man who had not seen her. She

is possessed of a fine face, an elegant person, and irresistible manners; she has a good understanding and a good heart; she is the idol of her father's household, and of all who know her. You cannot fail to obtain her pardon for your delay, and I congratulate you upon the certainty that your duty and inclination will point to the same object."

I stopped; and Millichamp continuing silent, I ventured to raise my eyes to his face, when I perceived that he had not been attending to what I said. I therefore rose, and quitted the hut, and, as I believe, without his being conscious of my leaving him.

It was now evening. The open sunshine of Millichamp's face has been clouded throughout the day; but I hear nothing of his intention to leave us. Will he go to-morrow? He ought

to go, and I hope he will—but what can I do more; I cannot force him out of my father's house. If you do not see him immediately, tell me what I shall say and do.

My head aches deplorably—I will not go to the Hall to-night. Adieu, my ever dear Maria. May you be happy with Millichamp—indeed, with him you cannot be otherwise.

LETTER XII.

TO MISS CARADINE.

Oakwood.

UNKIND Maria! You have suffered me to pass a week of anguish, and convert all the pleasure I received from Millichamp's company into self-reproach! You now tell me that I am in love, and that you waited to see two timid birds entangle themselves in the same net. You laugh at me for insisting upon your being happy with Millichamp, when, you say, I have a mind to be happy with him myself. If I really loved him, what must have been the situation of my mind? Knowing that he was en-

gaged to my friend, and that he was violating every duty, every hour he stayed? feeling that my regard for him, however innocent, must be repressed as a deadly sin, lest it should be a step towards making me the wretched rival of my friend? Such was the insupportable burthen you have removed from my heart, and my head-aches have flown with it.

You ask why I should doubt your affection for Mr. Marriot, when I have seen such uniform proofs of it? Dare I tell you that I thought Millichamp a being of a higher order; and that you would cease to love the lesser merit, when the greater were known?

But, my dear Maria, having got rid of the terrors that haunted me, I am now conjuring up another set of spectres. *If* I love Millichamp, which I trust I do not, I am still in a miserable situa-

tion. Though I no longer regard him as the destined husband of my friend, I have no reason to believe he loves me. The lovers I have hitherto had have all sought an opportunity to inform me of their sentiments in my favour; Millichamp has daily opportunities, yet never glances at the subject. That he esteems me, I cannot doubt; every look and every action prove it: but he esteems my father and mother, and Mr. and Mrs. Oakwood.

With regard to myself, what is this love? it is unknown to me, as to Millichamp. I will describe my symptoms, and you, whom experience has instructed, shall judge; shall tell me whether I have been so unfortunate and imprudent as to love, where no professions of love have been made to me.

I know every trifle that Millichamp prefers, and it is ready for him. I

have seen him cut a crust at dinner; he has one always laid by his plate. I saw one of his pillows placed upon the other; he finds it so when he goes to rest. I discovered a hole in his night-cap; it is darned, and so neatly that he will never perceive it. All this I do for my father and mother. Millichamp has had a slight indisposition since he has been with us; I have been his nurse, and have never failed to present his medicine at the appointed hour, or to remind him of his great coat, if he were going out. All this, and more, I should have done for my father or my mother.

I am almost afraid to proceed.—If we walk together, Millichamp offers me his arm; I take it, and am happy. If we are with Mrs. Oakwood, he offers it her; I feel not quite happy, perhaps a little sullen, and sometimes

loiter behind; though I would not deprive her of it for the world. This I should not feel, if I were walking with my father and mother. I cannot decide upon my case; but one thing I am certain of—that when I believed you were destined for each other, I most sincerely wished him gone; though I dreaded, and still dread, the taking leave.

I will quit this subject, which puzzles and distresses me, and give you love in another form.

I yesterday took a solitary walk to the ruins of the old Abbey, and taking Thomson's Seasons out of my pocket, I sat down on a broken stone, to read. Mr. Oakwood never lets man, woman, or child apply to him for work in vain. His grounds are so large there is employment for all. Once, indeed, it happened that there was not; and he set

two strangers to remove a large stack of kids to a distant place, and, as soon as they had finished, ordered them to bring them back; neither suffering them to eat the bread of idleness, nor to go without any bread at all. He was giving orders for the third removal, when he was told the men had left his service. This I did not mean to tell you. I was only going to say, that about three years ago a young stout rustic solicited employment, and, after labouring some time in the fields, he proved so industrious, attentive, and honest, that he was promoted to the rank of waggoner at the farm-house. This man now appeared; and from an opposite quarter advanced one of the footmen, belonging to the Hall. They met very near me; but I was concealed by a broken arch.

"Tom," says the footman, "how

came you to follow Molly the kitchen-maid last night, when she had been down to the farm-house for some eggs?"

"Mun nubbuddy fullo nubbuddy without exing yore leave?" said Tom, who is a native of Derbyshire.

"Nobody shall follow Molly without asking my leave, and having it too," replied the footman.

"An' if so bee I wunnot ex it, whot then?"

"Why then I'll knock you down."

"An what mun I be doing the whoile?"

"Doing, you scoundrel! why, doing your best. Do you think I fear what such a clod-hopper as you can do?"

"Ma'hap you dunnot; no moor nor oi moind a rapscallion i' a laced coote an a showder knot. My frock's my own, an yo conna sey that o'yore

cloose; an oi believe there's no bigger a skowndril under't nor there is i' yore yaller wescot."

"I shall give you one piece of advice, however," returned the footman; "waggoners frocks and yellow waistcoats out of the question; and that is, that you let Molly alone, or you'll come by the worst on't."

"Beleddy that's moor nor tha know'st, foin as tha art. Oi could dubble thee up, and put thee in an auger hole; an' oi'd doot tew; only oi think my mester would na loik me th' better for geeing thee a black eye or a bluddy nose; and, besoide he's so koind I should be loath t'anger 'im. Tha'rt mistekken i' thy mon; an oi think tha'rt mistekken i' th' wench. Its my moind to hae her, lu' the; and hes bin ony toime this tew year. Ma'

happen its thoing t'pley wee her, an then fo'sake her."

"What my mind is, is nothing to you. Molly knows my mind, and that's enongh."

"If Mally purtends to loike thee, hur's a fause jade; and tha' mest hae her to thy sen; for oi'll gee her o'er."

"You may give her over then, I'll promise you."

"Bur oi shanna tek thoi wud for't. Oi'll speak to her my sen, an oi'll sey, 'Mally, says oi,' 'Robbut says yo loiken him; and if you dun, sesso, an oi'll gee my sen no moor trubble abaate you. Ma' happen oi ma fret a bit at fust; but oi shall think oin a good miss. Bur if you dunna loike him, nor hanna loiked him, by Gosh, oi'm afraid i' shall knock him down i' good arnst;

and sartin sure oi shall if iver he's arter you agen.' "

Here the rivals parted, Robert muttering, that if the girl were to choose, she would not be a fool: but I thought he did not seem entirely satisfied with the reference.

In this village scene appear the characters of higher life: the real lover in a waggoner, the man of gallantry in a footman, and, I suppose, the coquet in the kitchen-maid.

Your forgetful swain is still here; unheeding, or not seeming to heed, the vows his uncle has made for him. What will be the end of it is not for me to say; but now I know his stay prolongs your happiness, as well as my own, it shall meet with no interruption from me.

I have just discovered that the darn is cut out of the night-cap, and the hole

left bigger than before. I wonder whether Mr. Millichamp expects me to mend it again!

After Mr. Nevil had left me so abruptly, he was seen no more. He employed the remainder of the day in writing letters, and in regulating his books, and quitted Oakwood the next morning before any person in the village was stirring. No tidings of him were received till yesterday, when it was announced that he had arrived at Lovewell the preceding evening, and had that morning made the lady of the manor his own. The happy pair, as the newspapers never fail to call such pairs, set off for London immediately after the ceremony; doubtless to provide those necessary appendages of happiness, new clothes, new carriages, new liveries, &c.

One of the letters Mr. Nevil wrote

before he left this village was addressed to Mr. Oakwood. He had, as you know, formerly amused himself at the expence of Mr. Oakwood's wheel-barrow and spade. I have frequently heard him blame himself for having descended to such ungentlemanly jokes; and it seems that he thought it necessary to ask Mr. Oakwood's pardon before he quitted his village. On reading his letter, Mr. Oakwood said, "Poor fellow! he has paid for his wit in the loss of my roast beef and plumb pudding. I should have liked to have shaken him heartily by the hand, and wished him no worse luck in what is to follow!"

MARGARET FREEMAN.

LETTER XIII.

TO MRS. BRUDENELL.

Oakwood.

It was not without reason, in giving you the character of Millichamp, that I mentioned his absence of mind. Yesterday he undertook to boil an egg for his breakfast; and when Mrs. Freeman entered the room, she found him boiling his watch, which he had taken out to mark the minutes necessary to cook his egg.

He is extremely fond of argument; not, as most persons are, in the hope of convincing their antagonist; nor, like a very few, for the possibility of

being convinced themselves; nor yet to shew his learning or his penetration; but for argument's sake. He will urge every consideration he can think of against one's opinion, and draw out all one has to say in its defence, and then acknowledge it was his own, from the beginning of the controversy. He assures us he once persuaded a Methodist preacher that the stars were made of moons, cut in pieces. I told him I believed that his solemn dignified manner, and the reputation of his profound learning, came in aid of his arguments. He confessed that it might be true; and thought they would still have received additional weight from long, flowing garments; or even a silk night gown, a velvet cap, and morocco slippers. He offered to prove to me the possibility of the moon's being made of green cheese, notwithstanding

the ridicule that whole generations had thrown on the idea. But I declined the dispute; telling him I was too contemptible an adversary to bring out his talents, as I never went farther in an argument than a reply and a rejoinder.

He seldom attacks John Freeman, who will not bear a joke, and whose prejudices are sometimes stronger than his arguments; but it is his delight to draw in my brother.

"I have been reading," said I, last night, "Mrs. Wollstoncraft's Travels in Sweden, Norway and Denmark. She has the heart and imagination of a woman, with the understanding and language of a man."

"You cannot believe that men have stronger understandings than women, can you?" said Millichamp.

"They have stronger persons," an-

swered I, " and, if I reasoned from analogy, I should suppose they had stronger understandings."

" That argument is in my favour," said Millichamp, " as facts will prove. We all know that women rule, and were born to rule, men; and, as it cannot be by superior strength, it must be by superior understanding. Spirit goes beyond strength; or man could never have tamed and ridden a horse."

" Man's understanding," said my brother, " has made the force of the horse subservient to his purposes. He invented the bit and the bridle; but his strength of arm is also necessary to restrain him, when the ingenuity of women would avail nothing."

" Still is woman man's superior," said Millichamp; " for if man govern the horse, woman governs the rider."

" But men generally suppose we

govern by our weakness," said I. "We appeal to your affections for support and kindness, and rule by making you believe that we submit. One of you has said,

> 'Nature for defence affords
> Fins to fishes, wings to birds,
> Swiftness to the fearful hares;
> Women's weapons are their tears.'

You pay that compliment to our weakness we should try for in vain by strength."

"I believe it will be found throughout the animal creation," said my brother, "that whenever creatures associate or herd together, one will be master. Man is a larger, stronger animal than woman, and therefore formed to be master. As Millichamp says, her spirit sometimes gets the better of his strength; sometimes even cunning will do it. When that is the

case, she will commonly change places with her master; but she had better be silent about it."

"Who can read the History of England," said John Freeman, "and not believe that women are qualified to govern? Among all our sovereigns, who was ever like Elizabeth; careful of the nation's money, as well as its honour; feared abroad, and beloved at home?"

"If women are qualified to govern in theory, father," said Margaret, "you would not wish to see them put it in practice."

"Nature makes exceptions to all general rules," said my brother. "Elizabeth was one; though in assuming the peculiarities of our sex, she did not renounce those of her own. To a masculine spirit of domination, she joined the mean dirty jealousy of a

woman; and the unfortunate Mary, Queen of Scots, fell her victim, because she could neither bear a rival in beauty nor in power."

"Mary, Queen of Scots, had plotted so much treason," returned John Freeman," that Elizabeth was obliged to bring her to the block in her own defence. She could never have been safe while Mary was alive; and, as one must die, it was only fair that it should be the author of the mischief."

"That," said my brother, "was the reason given for the riots at Birmingham. The mob burnt the meeting-houses of the Dissenters, and the dwelling-houses of some of the most respectable inhabitants of that persuasion; *because, if they had not, the Dissenters would have burnt the Church.* There is no abomination that this mode of preventing evil will not sanc-

tion. In these two instances it has been the pretext of murder and incendiary."

I expected John Freeman's answer would not have been of the most conciliating kind; for he adores Elizabeth almost as much as Oliver Cromwell; and, before he could speak, I said, "I have always thought, though Elizabeth ruled her subjects with a rod of iron, she descended to cajoleries that no man would have practised; and her good and beloved people themselves began to be weary of them. Yet, certainly, England was never, on the whole, better governed. If Elizabeth be compared with the tyrannical monster, her father; or the weak Stuarts, who succeeded her, she will be entitled to the highest praise."

"I will leave Elizabeth to you and Mr. Freeman," said Millichamp. "But

who that has the happiness of being admitted into the society of Mrs. Oakwood and Margaret Freeman, but must acknowledge the superiority of woman!"

"The present company is always excepted," said I, smiling. "It would not be fair to judge of mankind by you and my brother. We will say no more of superiority," added I; "but substitute the word *difference*. We will leave depth and solidity to you, and take quickness and fancy ourselves. You could no more create a beautiful landscape, out of a piece of blank paper, by the help only of that pair of scissars, than Margaret could reason on the immortality of the soul."

"I pity Mrs. Wollstoncraft exceedingly," said Margaret; "for I too have a heart. But I am thankful that I

have no brilliant imagination, nor uncontrouled passions, to hurry me beyond the bounds prescribed to my sex by either nature or custom; it is no matter which, for custom is second nature. The chain which galled her, whether it be imposed by God or man, sits so lightly upon me that I never feel it."

"Mary Wollstoncraft's energy of mind, and boldness of imagination," said I, "are almost unparalleled in the female world. Her daring and ardent soul entertained ideas, and formed a plan, unthought of, unattempted by woman. Her sufferings are a beacon to her sex; and if ever another Mary Wollstoncraft arise, she will not follow her steps: but her writings will be admired when her errors shall be forgotten."

LETTER XIV.

TO MISS CARADINE.

Oakwood.

We have been thrown into the greatest consternation to-day, by the following advertisement in Mr. Oakwood's London newspaper.

"Whereas a tall thin gentleman, about twenty-six years of age, dressed in black, and mounted on a handsome dark chesnut horse, fifteen hands high, left London, on his way to the north, on or about the 29th of last February, and has not since been heard of; this is to desire him, if living, to give immediate notice thereof to his friends. But as he is subject to fits of absence,

it is feared some misfortune may have befallen him; and, in that case, any person giving information concerning either him or his horse, that may lead to a discovery of his fate, to the printer of this paper, shall receive fifty pounds reward."

Mr. Oakwood, on reading this advertisement, came with the paper to our house, and pointing it out, desired my father to read it. Having done so, my father, with silence and great solemnity, put it into the hands of Millichamp. As he read it, his features expressed curiosity and astonishment; and could you think it possible? as he ended, he laughed. Not so your poor simple friend. When its contents were communicated aloud, I burst into tears; but such were the different emotions excited in the audience, that I hope they passed unnoticed.

"The day of reckoning is come," said my father. "What do you mean to do?"

"To write to my uncle instantly," replied Millichamp.

"Have you never written to him since you have been here?"

"I confess I have not."

"Did you *forget*?" said my father.

"This is a new kind of catechism," said Millichamp, smiling; "but I have my answers by heart. I did not wholly forget; and I will anticipate your next question? 'Why, then, did you not write?' by saying, that at first I intended it every day: I then only intended it every second day; and for some time past, I have ceased to think of it at all."

"You are surely to blame," said my my father. "As your uncle means to leave you all his fortune, he has a right to know where you are."

"I am indeed to blame," said Millichamp. "I have repaid my uncle's kindness with neglect, and subjected him to anxiety on my account; but I would not do the smallest thing for all his fortune, that I ought not to do without any part of it: and I have not exactly ascertained in my own mind the degree of right that one man has over another."

My father, with all his notions of liberty, was going to reply with some bitterness; when Mr. Oakwood, seeing the matter become serious, said, "Let me write to your uncle, Millichamp. I shall get fifty pounds by you. Or I can send him your horse, and say you were drowned in fording the river; and you may pass the remainder of your life in this dale, without danger of being detected."

I thanked him in my heart. He put

us all into good humour, and left us. Millichamp sat down to write his letter, and I took my work into the garden, secretly hoping that, when he had done, he would follow me. In about half an hour he seated himself by my side. "Well," said I, "you have left undone those things you ought to have done; but I hope you have been doing them now. You have been writing to your uncle; and if I were not afraid of continuing my father's catechism, I should ask what excuse you could make for neglecting the errand he sent you upon, and not having written to him before."

"You cannot ask any thing I should not answer with pleasure. Your father's questions remind me of an old game of my childhood, Questions and commands. Yours are of a softer nature; and I hope I shall not disgrace

myself in your good opinion. My letter to my uncle is in as humble a style as your own gentle spirit could have dictated; but, my dear Margaret, I never make excuses."

"If I were you, I should be afraid of his displeasure," said I.

I fear nothing," said Millichamp, "but doing wrong. In this instance I have done wrong; his displeasure will be justice, and I shall bow before it; but I do not tremble at it. Let us go back a little. My uncle, having no children of his own, adopts me, treats me as his son, perhaps loves me as his son; for I believe, if he had been a father, he would have been despotic. In return for these favours I owe him duty, gratitude, obedience; that is, obedience in all that respects himself. I have gone farther: for I have made many sacrifices to his usurpations in

what concerned me alone. At last he assumes the power of telling me whom I shall love—a power I have not over myself! whom I shall pass the remainder of my days with! and how miserable must they be, if I did not love! I set out at his bidding, willing, and even desirous, to oblige him; I am arrested by a higher power; I am charmed by the society of your family and Mr. Oakwood's, and I will add *your* society, Margaret; I feel incompetent to fulfil the engagement he has made for me, and I renounce it. So far I have done right; my own mind acquits me. Now comes my fault. I should have told this to my uncle; I should have informed him of my determination to proceed no farther, and not have involved him in the uncertainty respecting my fate which has produced that extraordinary adver-

tisement. For this, as I sincerely condemn myself, I have sincerely asked his pardon. I have not even urged in palliation of my error, as I justly might, the imperceptible influence of the motive which prompted me to disobey him, and the difficulty of explaining to him what I was not aware of myself."

I felt half-suffocated; whether with my own imaginations, I know not. At length I articulated, "I thought, perhaps, you would have answered your uncle's advertisement in person."

"I thought of it too," said he; "but on reflection, I do not see the necessity of it: my letter will answer the same purpose. I have not resolution enough to leave you; unless, indeed," added he, looking earnestly at me, "you wish it."

"I only wish you to act right,"

answered I, "and of that you are a far better judge than I am. For myself, alone, I should wish you to stay."

"I will stay, then, for both ourselves, if your father do not turn me out. I have requested my uncle to write to me here; and you shall work or draw, and I will read to you in a morning; and we will walk with Mrs. Oakwood, or our good mother or aunt, in an afternoon; and chat at the Hall, in an evening; and be as happy as we have been." Millichamp then put my arm in his, and we walked together into the house.

What am I to understand by this? Does Millichamp love me? I think he does. However, I will sit down quietly, and wait the event. How I dread this uncle! What reason I have to dread him, if, indeed, his nephew love me! A country girl! a farmer's

daughter! portionless, till the decease of my parents, which may Almighty Goodness long avert! and then possessed of a trifle! I seem always to have one heavy evil in view, and no more. When I regarded Millichamp as your future husband, that alone appeared insupportable. When my heart was at ease on that subject, I was uncertain of his love. So I am still; but as that phantom seems dissolving, this uncle stands before me, and shakes me with terror. But I will not go on thus, anticipating misfortune. I will imitate the man I most admire; endeavour to act right, and let consequences follow as they may.

LETTER XV.

TO MRS. BRUDENELL.

Oakwood.

THE shades of Oakwood are enlivened in a manner I did not foresee. Millichamp is still here, and our regard for him increases, as we know him more. A certain easiness of disposition would, in some measure, account for his lengthened stay; he requires a greater degree of force than most people to be put in motion; but Margaret is the chief spell that holds him here. I have long believed that such a man could not be domesticated under the

same roof with such a woman, and look upon her with indifference. An advertisement, inserted in the London papers by his uncle, has found him out; but even that has failed to move him.

Yesterday my brother, with six or eight men around him, was labouring hard, near our village road. The weather was warm, and he wore neither jacket, waistcoat, nor hat. A chariot, with four fine bay horses, and coachman and two out-riders, in very gay liveries, a phenomenon totally unprecedented in the annals of Oakwood, appeared; and a gentleman about sixty years of age, in a white wig, putting his head out of the window, and calling to the coachman to stop, beckoned my brother to the carriage. He obeyed; while his men, half tittering at the joke, and half

afraid of the consequences, laid by their spades and stopped their wheelbarrows to listen.

"My lad," said the gentleman; for young or old, workmen are all lads; "who does that house belong to?"

"To 'Squire Oakwood, sir."

"What sort of a man is he?"

"Something like me, sir."

"Aye, but I mean what sort of a character is he. Do you all like him?"

"I cannot answer for all, sir: they know best," pointing to his workmen; "but I can answer for one; I like him myself."

"Perhaps he pays thee well; and *we all like the bridge that carries us safe over*. I was told he was an odd sort of a man, and worked like a negro."

"Odd enough, sir; he works so hard you would not suppose him to be a gentleman."

"Aye, aye, I thought so. Always two sides to a story; I never find men that will work if they can live without work. And dost know one Mr. Freeman of this place?"

"Yes, sir."

"Whereabouts does he live?"

"At that farm-house, sir, opposite the park gates."

"Very well. *Thee* look'st as if *thee'dst* seen better days. Here's a shilling, for thee, to drink."

My brother said, "Thank you, sir," and pocketed the donation, while the chariot drove on to John Freeman's.

You have already pronounced the gentleman in the white wig to be Millichamp's uncle. His name is Goldacre.

Mrs. Simpson entered the room where I was sitting, out of breath with the arrival. "Ma'am, ma'am," cried

she, "what do you think? An *elegunt* chariot and four is stopped at John Freeman's; and there's a gentleman *in it*; and he's *got out*; and they say he's come to pay his addresses to Peggy. He'll put Mr. *Millichump's* nose quite out o' joint, as sure as a gun."

No nose can be secure against such an equipage," said I.

"I suppose we must have Mr. *Millichump* here," returned the housekeeper; "for I know they have but one spare bed at Freeman's, and they must turn Mr. Millichump out, to let the gentleman have it. To be sure, they might let the strange gentleman come here; for ours are the best beds, and the fittest for a gentleman. I ought not to say it, because I *seed* to the filling of every one of 'em, myself; but we've two and twenty as good

down and feather beds as any's in the north riding, let the others be where they will; and twenty of 'em's empty now. And *I'm* sure they're all well aired; for I make the housemaids sleep in 'em round. And so, if you choose, ma'am, or my master chooses, to have the gentleman here, I'll order a pair of sheets to the fire immediately."

"You calculate far before you, Mrs Simpson," said I; "but I believe you are right. *If* there be a stranger at John Freeman's; *if* he stay all night; and *if* Mrs. Freeman cannot accommodate him, we shall certainly have him here."

"O, ma'am, if I had not a little *forcast*, things would not go on as they do. I always contrive, ma'am. Nobody ever stands still for want of work; and *I'm* sure nobody's over-

worked. The spinning wheel fills up all vacancies, ma'am, and I spin, myself, of a winter's evening. I've fifty pair of homespun sheets in a chest, ma'am, all bran new; besides what's in wear; and they're full ell wide, and almost four yards long, and as fine as holland."

I commended the industry and management of Mrs Simpson as they deserved; and she retired, proud of my good opinion. At supper my brother and I laughed over the conversation with the gentleman in the white wig. The hour of nine as certainly brought John Freeman, as it did the Beast to Beauty; but this evening he came alone. He brought Millichamp's excuses, on account of the arrival of his uncle, and said Margaret was confined to her room with the head-ach. Poor girl! a little heart-ach mixed

with it, I am afraid. My brother sent instantly to request the uncle's company with Millichamp's, and to offer the former a bed; and soon after, Millichamp entered, introducing Mr. Goldacre. He started on seeing my brother, and immediately recognised the labourer in the lord of the mansion.

"Sir, sir," said he, "I protest I'm ashamed to see you. How could I be such a blockhead as not to find out who you was? but who would have thought of meeting you in such a trim?

"I told you," said my brother, with a smile, "you would not suppose me to be a gentleman".

"If Mr. Oakwood chooses to assume the appearance, and perform the work of a labourer," said I, "it is his fault, not yours, that you mistake him. You could only judge by appearances."

"That's very true, ma'am. Thank

you, ma'am," said Mr. Goldacre. "But I unluckily said something about an odd sort of a man; something I'd heard at the inn where I stopt last: and those people don't know how to give a gentleman a good word when he deserves one. But I beg your pardon, sir; I'm sure I intended no offence."

"I do not take any," replied my brother. "What you said was very natural; and as it was unexpected, it has given me some amusement."

Millichamp sat silent and thoughtful; Goldacre seemed determined not to forget my brother was a gentleman, and not a little proud to be noticed by one; my brother invited them all to dine with him to-day.

When we were summoned into the dining-room, I observed that Goldacre singled out the best dish, by an intuitive

glance, and placed himself accordingly. When he had helped himself with an unsparing hand, he assured us it was "a very good article." When he had emptied his plate, he cried out, "Any lady or gentleman want any thing in my way?" When he had helped me, "Ever another customer?" Then, thinking he had sacrificed enough to politeness, he put the contents of the dish on his own plate, and asked if any body would give him a commission for chicken.

When the gentlemen joined me at tea, Goldacre observed that he thought the young men were, now a days, very pig-headed. "Here," says he, "when I was young, and out of my time, I was very glad to get into business, and set up for myself; and business was nothing then to what it is now. Now I employ four hundred pair of hands, and set children

to work, night and day, that used to get nothing at all; but was a burden to their parents, and perhaps to the parish. Here, some people subscribe for soup for the poor, and some gentlemen give 'em bread and beef; I give 'em work, plenty of work; and if they won't do that, let 'em starve."

"You are right," said my brother.

"Charitable men may give food to the poor, and ingenious men may discover the cheapest kind of food for them.—A very worthy gentleman, a neighbour of mine, treated his friends the other day with a sample of his discovery in the form of food for pigs—whether it was served in a silver trough, and the company put their noses in it, I could not learn.—But prudent men, Mr. Goldacre, and you and I are of the number, will give them employment, and let them find food for themselves."

"Yes," said Goldacre "and I've got a deal of money by it; a great deal of money; a great deal of money indeed. And I live upon the fat o' the land, and eat and drink of the best; and I don't think, sir, youv'e any finer horses in your own stables than my coach horses; have you, sir?"

"No," said my brother. "I admired your horses very much."

"Did you, sir? I'm glad of that, however. I know these four, and one to match, that the groom rides, cost me five hundred guineas. Very well, sir; you see these things; and here's my nephew might be a partner in the business directly, and have it all when I'm gone; and I never can get him into the warehouse."

"I cannot believe, sir," said Millichamp, "that the noble faculties of man were given him to superintend the

drawing out of a thread *of cotton*, and preparing it for a *woman's* petticoat."

"What! would *you* have women go without petticoats, *then?*" said the uncle: "for we're told the flowers of the field *can't spin*; and I suppose the birds of the air can't."

"*No*," answered Millichamp; "but women might spin their own petticoats. Among the Greeks, the whole process of carding, spinning, weaving and bleaching the garments of the family, was under the direction of its mistress; even if she were a princess."

"Oh!" said Goldacre, "that you should always be supposing them heathen Greeks wiser than us, when the scripture itself talks of their foolishness and calls them stumbling blocks! Stumbling blocks I'm sure I've always found 'em."

"Millichamp," said my brother, "you

are wrong. No occupation, however trifling in itself, can be beneath the dignity of human nature when it provides for the comfort and accommodation of the human species; to say nothing of its relation to commerce and the influx of wealth, which provides so many other comforts. I look upon the noble faculties of man to be more usefully, nay, more worthily, employed in tilling the ground, fabricating a garment, or rearing a house, than in writing an epic poem."

"There! there!" cried Goldacre, "What will you say to that! If such a gentleman as Mr. Oakwood, who never was brought up to trade, any more than you; and, besides, has a great estate; if he will speak in favour of trade, what can you say against it?"

"I suppose," said Millichamp, "Mr. Oakwood will allow that it requires

greater talent and intellect to write an epic poem than to follow an ordinary occupation; and is not that the superior employment which demands the greater genius?"

"Farmers, weavers, and masons, are now so common," replied my brother, "that we have lost all idea of the original genuis which first set them to work. I do not under-value poets. I am an enthusiastic admirer of Shakespeare, and I am not a tame partizan of Cowper and Burns; but I should blame the man who studied them only, and neglected to provide himself with shoes and stockings; or even to make shoes and stockings for others, if that were his trade. In a word, I prize the useful more than the agreeable; one benefits all mankind, the other only men of fortune and leisure."

"Sir, you're a very sensible clever gentleman," said Goldacre. "I like your

notions. I once begun to read Shakespeare myself; and I have no doubt I should have admired him as much as you do; only I happened to be very busy just then, and had not time to finish him. And as to my nephew, sir, it's all custom. If he would but use himself to the manufactory for twenty years, I'd be bound for it he'd like it as well as I do."

"Your observation is very just," said I. "I knew a man of very great sense and learning who, in his younger days, repined that it was his lot to manufacture linen: and when he grew old, he would have been as miserable in a morning out of his warehouse, as in an evening out of his study."

"And I'll warrant that man never got rich," said Goldacre, "let him be who he would. Between two stools——I

say no more, ma'am; but business won't be minded by halves."

"He was not rich, for he preferred competence and ease, to wealth and care. But as trade ought to take a man's whole attention, and as our friend Millichamp would probably bestow half at least upon Greek and Latin, I think he would be good for nothing in your counting-house."

"I don't know but he'd be worse than good for nothing, ma'am. I'll tell you what he did one day. One of my clerks was ill; and so, to oblige me, he would go into the warehouse, on a Saturday. He is very good-natured; that I will say for him. And so he'd occasion to go into another room for a minute, while one of the workmen was there; and, as he was coming up stairs again, he heard copper jingle. Very

well; he came into the room again sooner than the fellow expected, and found him behind the desk, where he'd no business, standing close to a scuttle full of halfpence. He believed the rascal had been robbing me, and as he knew the quantity of halfpence in the scuttle, he need only have counted them to have charged him with it. But this he did not choose to do; and when I asked him the reason, 'O, sir,' says he, 'it was my fault. I ought not to have left the room. The education of the poor is so neglected, it is no wonder their principles are bad; and poverty on one hand, and money on the other, are temptations not easily withstood.' For my part, I think the more the poor are taught, the worse they are. The Sunday schools only teach them to read Tom Paine. The catholics manage

best, that let 'em know nothing but what the priests tell 'em."

"But, Millichamp," said my brother, "not to detect a thief, when you had it in your power, was to encourage roguery."

"If the thief had been a child," answered Millichamp, "I should have frightened him, in hopes of a reformation; but this man was old and poor, and had been employed by my uncle more than ten years, during all which time he had been trusted, and supposed to be honest.

"His having been trusted was an aggravation of his crime," said I. "Indeed Mr. Goldacre, your nephew is not fit for trade, and you had better not urge him to it; especially as you have money enough to establish him without."

"Money enough to be sure I have;

but I don't see why young folks should always have their way. Here, I've thought of a way of establishing my nephew by marriage; and instead of thanking me, and going to see the lady, and falling in love with her as he should do, he likes that no better than manufacturing cotton. But I won't argue with you, ma'am; I've too much regard for the ladies to contradict 'em. I know they're the weaker vessels."

Thus this gross clumsy pitcher, of the coarsest clay, considered us females, who have been called the porcelain of human nature! I made him no answer; for I remembered La Fontaine's *pot de terre* and *pot de fer*, and thought it best to keep out of his way.

I wonder how they have managed matters at the farm-house. John Freeman and Goldacre are civil, but shy;

and Millichamp looks graver than usual. I will let Margaret know that I have discovered the principal part of her secret, and engage her to tell me the rest.

LETTER XVI.

TO MISS. CARADINE.

Oakwood.

I WAS sitting yesterday evening at work with my mother, Millichamp reading to us, when a very splendid equipage stopped at our gate, and a servant entered, to ask if this was Mr. Freeman's. "My uncle!" cried Millichamp. But before he could utter the words I had guessed the truth, and felt as if I were going to be tried for felony. A moment after, Mr. Goldacre followed; and, without taking the least notice of my mother or me, exclaimed, "An't you ashamed, Richard, to stay skulking here, like a deserter or a

thief, and never to let me know where you was?"

"I am indeed, sir; and rely wholly on your goodness to forgive me."

"Here was I, wondering and wondering that I never heard from you. At last I received a letter from Mr. Caradine, who was not very well pleased that I'd broke my bargain with him; and you know I never break a bargain with any man, if he fulfils his part of the contract. And then I certainly thought you must have been drowned in a river, or have broke your neck with tumbling down a precipice, while you was thinking of logic or algebra."

"I beg your pardon, sir; I ought to have written to you."

"I think so indeed. And when you did write to me, I thought if I answered your letter, you would not

mind me, so I'd come myself;, and as soon as my horses and carriage and servants could be got ready, which was not above two days, I set out."

"I am afraid, sir, you will be very ill accommodated in this village."

"It seems *you* have not found fault with your accommodations, however."

"Mr. Millichamp, sir," said my mother, "has been satisfied with things in our humble style; he only looked to the intention, and he knew that was good. I have nothing to give you immediately but a slice of cold roast beef, or a cup of tea; but I will put a chicken down to the fire, which will be ready in half an hour.

"And let me order your horses to the village inn," said Millichamp.

"And I suppose they've no coach-house to put the carriage in," returned Mr. Goldacre, "and I should not like

to have it spoiled; it has just cost me three hundred guineas."

"At any rate they have a barn," said Millichamp, and he directed the servant where to find it.

My father entered, and welcomed his guest.

"I am come after my runaway here," said Mr. Goldacre. "I expected I should have been in a violent passion with him; but he seems sorry for what he has done, and I believe I must say no more about it. It is too late to go any farther to night; but if I could sleep any where in the village, we would go together to Mr. Caradine's to-morrow morning."

"I am sure Mrs. Freeman will give me leave to offer you my bed," said Millichamp; "but I cannot go to Mr. Caradine's, either to-morrow, or at all."

"Not go to Mr. Caradine's!" repeated his uncle. "What do you mean by that?"

"As I say, sir. I ought to have gone to Mr. Caradine's long ago; but I ought not to go now."

"I don't understand you. Is not right right? and is not late better than never?"

"Yes, sir, but circumstances are altered."

"When you think proper to acquaint me with the circumstances, then I shall know how to answer you. At present, all I can find out is, that you are a disobedient puppy, and likely to grow worse instead of better."

My father now set out for the Hall, whence a messenger came, in a few minutes, for Millichamp and his uncle. The latter forgot his ill humour in the

invitation, which included his sleeping at the Hall.

After breakfast this morning, when my father was out, my mother and aunt were engaged in the business of the family, and I was sitting at my needle-work, Mr. Goldacre began, "Now, Richard, for the circumstances you talked of last night." I rose to leave the room. "No, no," said he, "you may stay. I suspect you've a hand in the mischief." I burst into tears, and hesitated.

"My dear Margaret," said Millichamp, "I request you to stay. You are indeed concerned in my explanation, though never yet had you a hand in mischief." I sat down. "You judge rightly of Miss Freeman, sir," continued Millichamp, "if you believe it impossible to live with her, and not to love her. Her beauty

is her least charm, in my eye; though that might command universal admiration. Her talents are yet more extraordinary; but it is her good sense, her easy unaffected manners, her gentle quiet spirit and affectionate heart, that have made an impression on me, never to be effaced. For a time I was not sensible of either the nature or the strength of my own feelings. I was happy in her society; but I thought that to-morrow, or the next day, I should be able to quit her, and visit Mr. Caradine. Each day, however, placed her in a more amiable light than the last; my attachment increased with every setting sun, and formed the principal charm of my existence. 'Why then,' said I, 'am I to sacrifice these delicious sensations? Does the Creator of the universe, who formed man to be happy; who gave him reason and

perception to discover in what his happiness probably might consist; and who gave even to the birds of the air, who have not this latter privilege, that of choosing their mates; can he require me to give up my chiefest blessing, if it do not recede from me itself.' And, if he who made me assert no such power, can he have delegated it to another? to one of my fellow-creatures, as likely to be mistaken as I, and, in this instance, perhaps, more so?"

"Not so likely to be mistaken as you are," cried Mr. Goldacre. "When a young man's over head and ears in love, how can he judge so well as those who have reason and experience to guide them, and see things in a proper light? You'll see 'em differently bye and bye yourself."

"I do not conceive, sir, that my

attachment to Miss Freeman deprives me of my reason, or even impairs it. I see her beloved by every creature that knows her; though not in the degree that I love her. The ancients pictured love as blind; for my part, I find him so quick-sighted, that I think if she were to commit a fault, I should be the first to see and feel it."

"When you found she was drawing you in, you should have left her," said Mr. Goldacre.

"What an idea!" exclaimed Millichamp. "Art and cunning in Margaret Freeman! No, sir, I was drawn in only by the impression of excellence upon my mind; and I would have torn myself away, had I been commanded to do so by any moral duty. But for whom should I have done it? for a lady who could have no claim upon a man she had never

seen? or an uncle who, if he intended my happiness, might be mistaken in the means? And for what should I have done it? for a few dirty acres which I despise! I never told my love for Margaret till this hour. Though I gave myself up to the sweet emotion, and indulged the hope of a return, I would not offer her a heart on which you had laid an embargo. My duty both to you and her forbade it, till I had made you acquainted with my sentiments. Now," continued he, "nothing restrains me; and the greatest happiness of my life will be, if Margaret will accept the man who loves her more than life."

Millichamp took my hand, which I had neither the wish nor the power to withdraw. I could not speak; and if I had been able, I had nothing to say. Mr. Goldacre was dumb with astonish-

ment. He felt that he possessed no other power over his nephew, than that which the promised bequest of his fortune gave him, and he durst not urge it; for if Millichamp disdained dirty acres, he was not likely to be influenced by sordid gold. At last Mr. Goldacre exclaimed, "Very fine, indeed, if it will but hold! but your two hundred a year won't maintain a family; and when poverty comes in at the door, love flies out at the window."

"My Margaret's habits of economy will keep out the fiend," said Millichamp; "and, if I err, she shall correct me. Mr. Freeman," continued he, to my father, who then came in from his walk, "I have been soliciting Margaret to be mine. If I can obtain her consent, may I hope that you will not withhold yours?"

"I always determined," answered my father, "to let Margaret choose for herself; and if her choice falls upon you, I can have no objection, provided Mr. Goldacre has none."

"But I have a very great objection," said Mr. Goldacre; "and more than one; though I think the want of fortune would be enough. This young man, here, fancies he can live upon love; but he would find it very thin diet without a little beef and mutton. Besides, he's engaged to Miss Caradine, of Oatley Manor."

"I am sure," said my father, "I do not wish to force my daughter upon Mr. Millichamp. He's a very excellent young man; and the greatest proof I can give that I think so, is by saying he deserves her."

"That is saying too much," cried Millichamp. "Nobody can deserve

her: and, if that were possible, it could not be such an inactive book-worm as I."

"You lie," said Mr. Goldacre. "You'd deserve a princess, if you'd set yourself off to the best advantage; and, as it is, you know you might have Miss Caradine, with an estate of two thousand a year."

"I know Miss Caradine very well," said my father; "and I am certain, if Mr. Millichamp has any inclination for her, my daughter would not be her hinderance; for they are very particular friends."

"Why, he came into these parts on purpose to court Miss Caradine," said Mr. Goldacre; "and every thing was agreed upon between her father and me; when he came here, by chance, to your house, and your daughter 'ticed him to stay."

"Sir," said my father, "let me tell you, that you make a very ill return for the hospitality which has been shewn to your nephew. My daughter would entice no man; and she need not; for she might choose a husband within ten miles round. And, since you say so much, she shan't have your nephew."

"We shall never quarrel about that," said Mr. Goldacre; "and if I was not engaged to dine with Mr. Oakwood, I would order my carriage and horses, and servants, and leave your house directly, and take my nephew with me."

"I hope, sir," said Millichamp, "you will not speak so unjustly of Margaret, lest I should forget you are my mother's brother."

"Aye, there it is, now. I've known some uncles that would have

disowned their nephews; aye, and disinherited 'em too, if they were determined to marry without their consent: but here's a young man who not only says, I don't care a farthing for your consent, but if you say a word against the girl I love, I'll disown my uncle! This it is to learn Latin and Greek!"

"I hope, sir," said my father, "you will remain here as long as is agreeable to yourself; and, as to Mr. Millichamp, we shall always be sorry to part with him; but you need not fear that I shall assist him in running away with my daughter."

"Thank you," said Mr. Goldacre: "that's fair, however." They all went together to Mr. Oakwood's, with the appearance of civility, if not of friendship.

I should fail in attempting to give

you any idea of my feelings during this scene, while the questions were agitating, whether, or no, I were worth having, and whether, or no, I should be had. What pleasure did the behaviour of Mr. Millichamp give me! It was noble and tender; all I could have wished, and more than I could have imagined! The uncle seems, all his life, to have considered money as the sovereign good. To the acquiring this he has devoted all his faculties; and, as they were adapted to the pursuit, he has succeeded. His vanity has triumphed in his success, and he has looked down with contempt on those less favoured mortals, who could not spend so much money, or make so great a shew, as himself. Here, his idol is contemned; a circumstance which never entered into his calculations! For the first time, a vague idea

floats in his mind that there is something superior even to riches; but so little is he qualified to discriminate what it is, that he believes it is Latin and Greek. Though he is ignorant and narrow-minded, he is not ill-natured; time and patience might, perhaps, conquer him; but I fear my own father. He has been wounded in a tender part, by the gross vulgarity of Mr. Goldacre, and will not so soon forget it as Mr. Goldacre himself. The gentlemen are still at the Hall, where I should have joined them to tea, if I had not been a party interested in the discussion of the morning.

LETTER XVII.

TO MRS. BRUDENELL.

Oakwood.

MILLICHAMP is the declared lover of Margaret Freeman. Goldacre growls at it; but in an under voice; for he is a little afraid of his nephew. It seems the uncle repaid himself for his forbearance, by speaking out to John Freeman, who has taken offence, and will not soon forget it. The evening after I wrote to you last, they were all at our house; and Goldacre thinking to avail himself of my brother's opinion and mine, which had several times been given in his favour, opened his cause in full convention. Addressing

himself to my brother, he said, "I suppose, sir, you partly know how matters stand between my nephew and me; and as you are a very sensible gentleman, and one that hears reason, I'll tell you the whole story; and here he is; let him contradict it if he can."

Poor Margaret turned pale. Both uncle and nephew observed it. Millichamp, who was standing, took a chair next to her; and Goldacre said, "You need not be afraid, young woman; I've nothing to say against *you*. Well then; as I've no children of my own, for this five years back, I've always looked upon my nephew as my child, and treated him as my child. Have n't I, Richard?"

"I acknowledge it, sir."

"Well, sir, I think that deserves some return. I told you yesterday, sir, that I wanted to bring him into

my business; where he might have taken the trouble off my hands, and get rich himself; and he never would agree to it. Well, sir; here's Mrs. Oakwood; and she's a very sensible lady; and she says I'd better let him have his way; and so I give up the point, and he *may* have his way; and there's an end o'that. Now, sir, comes the cream of the story; but I should not like it to go any farther. Here's Mr. Caradine of Oatley Manor—You know him, sir?"

"I do," said my brother.

"He's a clear two thousand a year estate," resumed Goldacre; "but he's fond of hunting, racing, and carding; and he knows I've money, plenty of money; and he comes to me for one thousand pound after another, one thousand pound after another, and interest not very well paid; till, if all

come to all, as the saying is, the estate's as much mine as his own. And he has but an only daughter, you know, sir; and so I says to him one day, Mr. Caradine, 'when you and I shut our eyes, your daughter and my nephew must divide the Oatley estate.' 'I think,' says he, 'they'd better share it together.'—'Why,' says I, 'the advantage would be all on your side; for one half's all your daughter 'll have; but my nephew 'll have a pretty penny more than the other half.' However, I thought the whole was a desirable thing, and Miss Caradine was a handsome young lady, and very accomplished, and of a good family, and I consented. And we agreed that I should send my nephew over, and that when the young folks was married, they should live at Oatley Manor, and run in at the ruck, and

no more interest to pay, and all should be settled upon them, and nobody be ever the wiser; and that was all in Mr. Caradine's favour; for I need not mind who knew. Well, sir; my nephew was at London; and I wrote, and told him the whole business, and desired him to go down to Mr. Caradine's directly; and he wrote me a very dutiful letter, and said he was going to set out; and, from that time, sir, I never heard of him. So, at last, there comes a letter from Mr. Caradine, complaining that I'd broke my bargain; and, sir, I never broke a bargain in my life; for I know *Honesty is best Policy;* and I should not have been worth what I am, if I had not been punctual. So I told him the case; that I was as much in the dark as himself, and that I feared my nephew had come to an ill end,

because he was subject not to know what he was doing. Well, to make short of my story, after waiting till I gave all up, I put that advertisement in the newspaper that you have seen; and then comes a letter from my gentleman himself, down on his marrow-bones, begging my pardon. So I set off in a duced hurry, for fear a letter should not bring him; and here I find him over head and ears in love with that young woman; and he's turned Miss Caradine off, before he has seen her, and he's ready to turn me off too. I won't say the young woman 'ticed him; for she's a pretty young woman, and a pretty sort of a young woman, and he *might* fall in love of his own accord; but this I will say, I never saw him taken with one before. But, however, we'll let that pass. Now, sir, what I want to know

is this. *One good turn deserves another.* If I give up my plan of bringing him into my business, to oblige him; don't you think he ought to marry Miss Caradine to oblige me?"

"I think he ought to consent to your marrying her if you like it," said my brother.

"Ah, sir! you are joking now," said Goldacre: "however, stranger things than that have come to pass. But will you answer my plain question?"

"Why, then, I think he ought not," replied my brother.

"Your reason, if you please?"

"Because he would be to live with her; not you. I think the matrimonial yoke must be heavy enough, where both parties love each other, and join to support it; but it must be intolerable where they do not."

"But might not he have loved Miss Caradine?"

"Not when he already loved another. Before that time he was willing to oblige you, and prepared to try. Your nephew and you have both the same object in view—his happiness; you only differ about the road to it. Both may be mistaken; but he is the least likely; because he knows his own feelings and dispositions best. Perhaps, in marriage, something more than cool reason is required; some warm impulse that should urge a man beyond the fitness of things. Without this, some objection might for ever remain unanswered. It may also be necessary to make him overlook, or pardon, the failings of a woman, whom he is to see in all humours, and at all hours. This impulse is on Millichamp's side, not yours: and allowing that either might be mistaken, the mistake ought to lie

on his side, not yours. You take upon yourself too heavy a responsibility, if you insist upon his being happy according to your opinion; let him judge for himself, and you are quit. If he succeed, you ought to rejoice; if he fail, you will have the gratification and pride of hearing him say, 'I wish I had taken the advice of my uncle.'"

"I shall get no good from you, I find. My nephew himself said something yesterday morning about his being a better judge than me. And I suppose, ma'am, if I was to ask your opinion, you'd side with the young woman; for you women always hang together?"

"Margaret and I differ a little," replied I, "when she is the subject; for I think much more highly of her than she does of herself. I think your nephew might have searched ten

counties, and not have found such a treasure."

"I thought so," said Mr. Goldacre. "You're all against me. However, one thing I'll be positive in; I'll not consent to the marriage *now*."

"And I'll not consent to it, till you do," said John Freeman; "if I do then."

"Well, Old Buck," said Goldacre, "give me thy hand. I'll not say I won't consent. Perhaps you and I may agree after all; and instead of telling the young folks they're wrong, leave 'em to find it out."

John Freeman gave his hand with readiness. Millichamp, who had withstood all the buffetings of his uncle, unshaken as a rock, now melted into tears. He would have thanked him, but could not.

"But," continued Goldacre, "I

can't stay and live at Oakwood; and here's this confounded Mr. Caradine, what's to be done with him?"

"Abide by your own maxim, *Honesty is the best Policy*," said my brother. "Go, and tell him the truth. If you will make me a visit on your return, I shall be happy to see you. In the mean time, Millichamp shall be my guest. It will not cost me much to maintain him; for I will turn him loose into my library, and he will forget half the dinners he ought to eat."

Millichamp and Margaret, who had been foreboding a separation, looked their thanks.

"And I meditate a visit to a friend near Lancaster," said I, "in the course of the summer; and I can no more hope to move my brother than one of his old oaks; for time has rooted him

to the spot as firmly as they; so I will take his gig, and Millichamp shall drive me."

Goldacre now looked thankful; as he thought there was less danger in his nephew being run away with by me than by Margaret.

Yesterday he left us, for Oatley Manor, and to-day we expect him to return.

LETTER XVIII.

TO MRS. BRUDENELL.

Oakwood.

Mr. Goldacre returned, as we expected, and stayed a week with us. We all parted excellent friends, and the lovers are allowed to hope. The affair at Mr. Caradine's was soon settled. The father blustered a little, and was obliged to submit. The daughter triumphed openly, and told Mr. Goldacre that she loved another, and that all Millichamp's offers would have been vain. It seems that Margaret, who is her intimate friend, knew this; but never mentioned it to either

Goldacre or Millichamp, lest it should have exposed Miss Caradine to the displeasure of her father; an instance of self-denial which has raised her in the esteem of the uncle; and added, if possible, to the love and admiration of the nephew.

When Mr. Goldacre had been with us a week, he gave notice of his departure. "I have been so comfortable here," said he, "that I don't know how to leave; but dearest friends, you know, must part. To be sure, I've clerks at home that can go on without me; but every man should mind his business; or his business won't mind him. I did not think of staying so long; and if any body had told me of it, I should have expected to be a fish out of water. But you're all so kind and so agreeable, that, somehow or other, the time has

slipped away; but I mean to go to-morrow."

"The time you have been here has slipped away as pleasantly with us as with you," said my brother; "and we wish you to prolong your stay if you can."

"I join in my brother's request," said I.

"Thank you, ma'am; thank you both," returned he; "but the time must come; so it may as well be to-morrow as another day. But if you come into Lancashire, ma'am, I shall be proud to see you at my house. I'll entertain you in the best manner I'm able; I've the best of every thing in season; and I'll shew you my manufactory."

"I thank you," replied I. "I should be very happy to see *you*; but it is my wish to keep to windward of all manufactories. I cannot digest their thick black smoke."

"I am so used to it, I never perceive it," said Mr. Goldacre.

"And I am so little used to it," returned I, "that I find it a great annoyance, when I am obliged to endure it, even in passing. I think the man who invented your steam engines has much to answer for. He has blackened the beautiful green fields and trees, and poisoned the pure atmosphere, created by God Almighty; he has changed the ruddy bloom of health in the countenances of his fellow creatures, to a sickly pale. And for what? That a horrid smoke may do as much business as a hundred rosy cheerful women; and that a family may earn enough in a week, for the father of it to be drunk the three first days. But this is not the whole of the evil; for habit and necessity send the children to work early; confinement ruins

their constitutions, and bad example their morals. Where human beings are in greatest numbers they are worst; and it must be so; for some bad must be among them; and you know, Mr. Goldacre, that *one sheep will infect a whole flock.* The boys grow up to drunkenness and profligacy in their turn; the girls to immodesty; and both continue in dirt and ignorance."

"Now look at the husbandman. He has few neighbours; and, among these few, there is small chance of a bad one; and, if one have ill propensities, he may pass a life, without having them called into action. His house exhibits decency and order; his wife labours in the fields, or at the washing-tub, abroad, and at the spinning-wheel at home. The children are brought up in habits of industry and economy. The boys drive the

plough; the girls assist the mother in domestic occupations; and both pick stones and weeds for hire. In this school they learn first to become good servants, and then good fathers and mothers."

Mr. Goldacre shook his head, and looked as if he pitied my ignorance. At last he said, "Why, ma'am, do you reckon it nothing that we can get up our goods so cheap as to undersell our neighbours? If I was to trust to the fingers and spittle of your hundred cherry-cheeked women, I might dine upon boiled beef and turnips, and carry an empty purse."

"I do not understand manufactures," said I; "but it appears to me that our neighbours will share the advantages of our discoveries at no very distant period, and have steam engines of their own; we shall then

be upon an equality, as when both depended on the spinning-wheel; and the price of labour being lower in France, and the taxes less, the French will be able to sell their manufactures as much cheaper as if the steam engine had never been invented.

"But we are getting rich the while, ma'am," said Mr. Goldacre.

"If you and I consider only ourselves, I believe you are right," said I. "You sell more cottons than you would, without the steam engine, and I buy them for less money."

"And who should we consider, but ourselves, ma'am?" demanded Mr. Goldacre. "Does not *charity begin at home?* Is not it, *every one for himself, and God for us all?*"

"Yes," said John Freeman; "but we should consider others, as well as ourselves. *We should live and let live.*"

"That's true," said Goldacre. "I always take care of the first part of the saying myself, and leave it to others to take care of the second."

"I apprehend another ill consequence from the steam engine," said my brother. "It will consume coal faster than the earth can produce it; and I look forward to the time when I shall be obliged to fell my old oaks to warm myself. But I have been told," continued he, "that a method has been discovered to make the steam engines eat up their own smoke; and, if it be possible, they ought to be made to do it. I know a very worthy old gentleman, who has been smoked out of his family mansion, by an engine that reared up its head under his nose."

"More fool he to mind it," said Goldacre. "He should have done as I do; snuff it up, and never think of it.

But he did not feel the smoke in his pocket," added he; "and perhaps I might not like to be blacked for nothing, myself. However, ma'am, if you'll come and see me, I'll stop my steam engine while you stay."

"I consider that as the highest compliment you can pay me," replied I; "and if I were going into your neighbourhood, I would accept your invitation; but I go no farther south than Lancaster. Perhaps you will favour us with your company again, at Oakwood, when I return."

"Perhaps I may, ma'am," said he; "for Mr. Oakwood and you are such agreeable gentlefolks, that I should be loth to drop your acquaintance; and I suppose my nephew will be loitering here, or hereabouts. I shan't have to advertise him again."

Millichamp became our guest when

his uncle went to Oatley. When he was first permitted to enter the library, he stood motionless with surprise. "Very well done," cried my brother; "are not they; considering they are only of wood?" Millichamp started, and cast on him a look of the utmost contempt: and it was not till several books had been taken down, that he was convinced they were real paper and print, and laughed at his own credulity. He now forgets to eat, in earnest, as my brother predicted in jest. The hours pass away unperceived, when he is in the library; and, as our maxim of "Every man in his humour" extends to our visitor, we never summon him to dinner, and have several times dined without him. He commonly finds his way to the cold meat in the afternoon, or evening; but, if he hear Margaret's voice, as he

passes the door, hunger is again forgotten, and he makes dinner trust till supper.

I mean to set out in a fortnight on a visit to my old friend, Mrs. Douglas, of Arrowby Lodge: and, as I have promised to write to Margaret Freeman, you will probably not hear from me again till my return to Oakwood.

LETTER XIX.

TO MISS FREEMAN.

Ambleside.

You will be surprised, my dear Margaret, to see Ambleside at the top of a letter you expected from Arrowby Lodge. When we arrived at the house of my friend, Mrs. Douglas, we found it so full of company, that, after staying one night, I determined to take a view of some of the celebrated lakes of Cumberland and Westmoreland, which have all my life been the objects of my ardent curiosity: and by the time of our return, a large party will have left. I have taken Millichamp with me, of

course. If I were thirty years younger, I should expect you to be jealous; as it is, I will forgive you, if you are not. If you should have a rival, it will start up in the form of a mountain, a lake, or a waterfall: of these Millichamp is an enthusiastic admirer; but he does not even see a woman, if he pass her.

The streets of Lancaster are narrow; but there is something venerable in the appearance of the place. The houses are of stone, and many of them large. The county-hall is a noble edifice, with massive pillars. The church and castle are situated on a magnificent rock, which commands town and country, sea and land. As we stood in the church-yard, I looked over an expanse of rolling waters, and shuddered to think, that when they had subsided, my horse was to drag me over the space they now covered. Millichamp's eyes were

directed to the eastward, where the majestic Ingleborough, and his attendant mountains, formed the boundary of sight towards his Margaret. I did not enter the castle, because it is the county prison; and I have such an aversion to see my fellow-creatures struggling under sickness, madness, or captivity, that I never saw the inside of an hospital, a receptacle for lunatics, or a prison, in my life. If I could restore health to the sick, reason to the deranged, or liberty to the captive; if I could even carry with me an alleviation of their distress; I would conquer my feelings: but I never can go to see misery from curiosity.

We crossed the Lune, on a handsome modern bridge, on quitting Lancaster, the quay below presenting a busy scene of warehouses and vessels; and pro-

ceeded about four miles on the great north road, when we turned to the left, to Hest Bank, where the sands begin, that we proposed to cross. The inn here accommodates a very small company of sea-bathers, whose only machine is the landlord's cart. We stayed all night, and found the situation of the public room so pleasant, that it might well compensate for a few inconveniences. From its windows are seen the peninsula of Lancashire, running out into the sea; with Peel castle at its extremity, and the town of Ulverstone farther in; on the north, the two rivers Keir and Kent, divided by a ledge of rocks, empty themselves into the sea; but they are too distant to be distinguished, among the alternate masses of sand and water, left by the receding tide.

The sands here are so flat, that the tide advances with rapid strides, and

seldom runs off so as to leave them quite dry. It is *said* that the Milthrop sands, which are the outlet of the Keir, are sometimes covered as fast as a horse can gallop: and it is *certain* that a gentleman, crossing them in a gig, found them so unsound, that he was obliged to put his horse on full speed. He and his wife, who both related the fact to me, compared the motion of the the sands under them to the shaking of a blanket.

This story, with a few others which I heard, of men having been obliged to run away from their shoes, and riders from their horses, made me contemplate my approaching journey not very much at my ease.

Next morning, when the waters had retired, we set out; the landlord of Hest Bank, whom we had engaged for our guide, leading the way, on

horseback; Millichamp and I close behind in the gig; and James following, with his horse's nose almost leaning over the gig's back; for every one was determined not to be left behind.

A road like this, washed twice in the twenty-four hours by a deep sea, must assume a variety of forms. The one it wore now was awful. It had rained in the night; and, though the rain had ceased, the clouds hovered low; the sand was every where wet; and we frequently splashed through pools of sea-water. We soon crossed the Keir; a rapid river; but now not higher than a man's mid-leg. The shore on our right was rocky, and formed a large bay, the centre of which, perhaps, was not more than three miles from us. The distance across is universally allowed to be eleven miles. I looked at my watch, and when we had

trotted half an hour, I asked our guide how far we had come. "Three miles and a half." When we had trotted an hour, I repeated my question. He looked round, "Seven miles." I was glad to hear he measured miles at that rate; for I believe, by the pace of the horses, we had not gone more than five. I observed he watched very attentively for the track of the stage-coach, which had gone before us. Once or twice it was obliterated, which gave me some uneasiness; but he had dexterity enough to find it again, and at last brought us to the brink of the river Kent.

Here we were met by a grey-headed old man, called the carter. He was on horseback, wrapped in a rug coat; and his legs were cased in a pair of huge, thick boots. To meet with such a being on the brink of a large river, in

a vast solitary desart of sand, and to know it was his business to conduct us safely through it, was a comfort you may easily imagine. I called out to him, "Is the river deep?" He answered, "No, shallow water;" and we followed his steps to the other side. The current was so strong, that it almost made me giddy, and I fancied it was driving us down towards the sea. It was considerably more than knee-deep.

Arrived in safety at the other side, we stopped some time to converse with the carter, who had a dignity of manner above his station. His grandfather and uncle had successively been carters, the uncle for seventy years; so that the office seems hereditary in his family. The allowance from government is ten pounds six shillings and eight-pence a year, and as much land for the keep of his horse, as is worth

eight or nine pounds more: but his principal revenue arose from the gratuity that every traveller was willing to pay for his services. Time was, when no person ventured to cross the river without him; now, a post and a stage-coach traverse the sands every day, and other travellers take the opportunity of accompanying them, and withhold the recompence of the poor carter, who complained that his place was not worth having. He is obliged, by his office, to be on horseback about six hours every tide, and every second week there are two tides in the day. He says there is seldom a winter's day so bad that he cannot cross. The worst times are those when the river is obstructed by ice. His post is at the edge of the water. If a traveller approach on the same side, he conveys him over; if on the other, he goes through to meet

him; if on both, he escorts the nearest first; and, when nobody appears, he frequently rides through the river, to see that the sands are safe. Millichamp asked him if it were an unhealthful employment. He said, "No; the only difficulty was to stand the cold."

When we had crossed the river, I drew a shilling from my purse: while we were talking, I took out another; and Millichamp and I both repented we had not doubled the reward.

We now soon reached the opposite shore; having been one hour and forty-four minutes on our passage. We judged the distance to be nine miles; but our road had been tolerably straight: if ever it be made eleven, it must be when the state of the sands or the weather obliges the traveller to keep nearer the shore. I was glad to see the horses' feet on terra firma, for I

like sands so little, that I will not cross them again.

We had only three miles to Cartmel, a poor neat town, delightfully situated in a valley, skirted by hills; and hills were now becoming mountains. The church is large and singular. A high shelving roof rises between two smaller ones, and one tower steeple rises out of another; the angles of the upper against the sides of the lower. Within, is a choir, with twenty-six stalls. By some odd chance, or combination of ideas, these are ornamented with vines and bunches of grapes, which are also twining round, and hanging down the pillars. There wanted only the figure of Bacchus to make me determine what deity was worshipped at Cartmel.

We took the road to Ambleside; but having proceeded about five miles, we quitted it, to sleep at Newby bridge, at

the foot of Winander Mere, which is here called *Windthermere Watther*.—The lake itself is not seen; but the bridge, of five arches, is over the river which issues out of it. The place is beautiful,—a narrow dell, embosomed in hills. The water is fringed with wood; and the bridge, the inn, a gentleman's house, and one or two others of some consideration, enliven the scene. On a round hill behind it, called the Knot, is a tower that had been our land-mark from Cartmel. The dialect here is something like ours. An old woman, who looked like one of Macbeth's witches, told me she had a sister, but "hoo was gang'd awa;" and then called out to her grandson. "Ha lang shalta be, before tha cum, Jan?"

This morning our road lay across the foot of Winander Mere, and at Fell Foot, the seat of Mr. Dixon, we arrived at its

banks. We travelled up it to Bowness, which is eight miles from Newby bridge, over steep, round, rocky hills; sometimes wood intercepting our view of the water, and sometimes seeing it stretched at our feet. At Bowness we took a boat. The surface of the water was as smooth as glass, and three beautiful islands, crowned with wood, rose out of it. I do not include the large island in the beauties of Winander Mere. Though in itself beautiful, it is so near the western shore, that it appears like a headland, jutting out, and narrowing, rather than embellishing the lake. On this island we landed, and made the tour of it, attended by the gardener. It is of an irregular, oblong form, containing forty-two acres, and the walk round it is a mile and a half. You have heard of Mr. English, its former possessor, memorable for the

cabbages and pot-herbs which flourished under his auspices. Weary of lake scenery, he sold it to Miss Curwen, a great heiress, who built a house upon it, and gave it, with herself and her name, to Mr. Christian. They reside there during the summer months; and a more beautiful situation, or one so uncommon, can scarcely be found. In winter, an old housekeeper, and the gardener and his family, who live in a cottage, are the only inhabitants of the island.

The house is circular. What an idea! Ugly; and inconvenient as ugly. It looks like a huge overgrown summer-house; though the gardener told us that it held twenty-six beds, besides those for servants. To ornament this round house, the architect has added a square portico, which has no fault that I could discover, except that it has no busi-

ness there. The house is built of the stone of the country; the portico of very fine stone, brought from Liverpool at a great expence. The inside walls are of bricks, which, by the time they arrived at Winander Mere island, are said to have cost three-pence each.

The gardener has laid out the ground with great taste; planting the middle of the island, which hides its smallness; and diversifying the shores by scattered trees, clumps, and openings to the finest parts of the lake. His own house is a paltry imitation of a castle; but he has had the good sense to bury it in a wood. You have heard terrific tales of bottom winds agitating the lakes, when all was calm above. This man assures me they never existed; except, perhaps, in the imaginations of some travellers of genius.

We intended to have visited some other parts of the lake; though I believe none could excel those we had seen; but the distant clouds threatening rain, we doubled the island of Crowholm, and rowed back to Bowness. And prudent it was so to do; for the rain came on soon after, and continued five or six hours.

At six o'clock the weather cleared up, and we set out for this place, six miles and a half farther; our road still on the borders of the water; but it was more frequently hidden from our view. In one place it went over a steep rock, from the top of which we saw the whole lake at once; a noble sight! At Low Wood, the most fashionable inn of Winander Mere, the road runs close to its margin; the water is broad; the waves roll against the shore; and it gives the idea of an arm of the sea.

The lakes of Wales are grand and solemn; that of Winander Mere is gay and beautiful.

Adieu, my dear Margaret. You shall hear of Ambleside in your next letter from

JANE OAKWOOD.

LETTER XX.

TO MISS FREEMAN.

Keswick.

AMBLESIDE is a poor little town in a recess of the mountains, at the head of Winander Mere. We climbed about half a mile above the inn, to see a waterfall, which, after the rain, well repaid our pains. The road to it is a path, not made with hands, but feet; the latter part hanging over the torrent, and more appropriate than commodious. The cascade is composed of two separate falls, bursting through trees, and seen through trees, uniting in

one, and rushing into a deep rocky channel.

I had an inclination to cross the mountains immediately above Ambleside, at the pass called Kirkstone. I consulted the people at the inn, who gave the road a dreadful character; though they said they had dragged a post-chaise over it, with four horses. I am very cautious in believing what people say of their own roads, for I have uniformly found them worse than the description. To a man who goes often to a place, the shortest way is the best; custom smooths its ruggedness, and lessens its difficulties; but I would no more take such a man for my guide, than I would follow a banker's clerk through the city of London, and dive into every alley which pointed to my mark, regardless of dirt, dark-

ness, and ill smells. Though I am slow in believing the good, I did not doubt the bad report; but I determined to judge for myself.

We rode up three quarters of a mile of very steep road; we relieved the poor animal that drew us, by walking; we then rode about half a mile. By this time we were come to a hollow in the mountain, and saw the last steep, winding before us, to the top of the pass. "They who make so much of Kirkstone," said I to Millichamp, "have not travelled in Wales." I found it, however, more than it seemed; a regular steep ascent of about a mile. I walked the whole, and then boasted I was at the top of Kirkstone. We calculated the distance from Ambleside to be three miles; though it is there called four, and four and a half. The top of Kirkstone is flat; but moun-

tains still rose above us on each side. It is exactly what in Wales is called a *Bwlch*; but higher than any I ever crossed in that country. Before we descended, the view opened into Patterdale, which, I confess, did not answer my expectation. The descent was horrible: it was steep and rugged; it wound among rocks, and looked down upon a torrent, newly started from the side of the mountain; but the worst of its qualities was the distance to the bottom; at least two miles. As I had walked more than two-thirds up, for the sake of the horse, I walked the whole way down for my own; but when I arrived at the bottom, I was too weary to boast that I had *got over* Kirkstone.

The high end of Patterdale, which we now entered, is broken rocky ground, such as frequently grows at

the foot of mountains; it affords pasturage. As we advance, the small lake of Broader Water fills the vale: after which, it expands into beautiful meadows, till it ends in Ullswater. The head of Ullswater is ten miles from Ambleside; the larger half of which, for, surely, I cannot say the better, is over Kirkstone.

We stopped at Dobson's, a small inn in Patterdale, a little short of Ullswater; and, from a rock behind the house, had a fine view of the upper reach. From a steep rock, called Stybray Crag, we had afterwards a view of the middle reach; which I think the finest part of the lake. Ullswater occupies the whole of the vale; Place Fell, and other lofty mountains, forming the southern boundary, and woods and craggy rocks the northern. We travelled eight miles and three quarters

by its side, which is the whole length of Ullswater. Along the two first reaches, the road never deviated from the lake. It sometimes ran close to its margin; at others, climbed over rocky promontories, which shoot into it, and then passed through woods on its border. We found the woods tenanted by myriads of flies, which, as they are seldom disturbed by man, considered us as invaders of their domain, and tormented us as they thought we deserved. The lower reach of the lake approaches the open country; and its boundaries are not so grand on one side, or so romantic on the other. From the end of Ullswater we accompanied its outlet, the river Emont, through a rich country of corn and grass, with a chain of mountains in the back ground. At Dalemain, the seat of Mr. Hassal, God has given all that man can desire.

At Penrith we slept. It appeared a handsome lively town; but I was so much fatigued, that I did not go out of my way to see it.

The next morning we came back two miles of our road, and turned to the right for Keswick, which is seventeen miles and a half distant from Penrith. We passed the villages of Stainton and Penruddock, and came to a high uninclosed country, like downs. We now approached the mountains. At eight miles, a lofty, lonely, green mountain, called Mell Fell, rose on the left; and, a little farther, Southerfell, on the right. Here we entered a defile, and rode along the foot of the huge and rugged Saddleback. At fourteen miles, still at the foot of Saddleback, is the village of Threlkeld, and an inn, which afforded us some refreshment. We then quitted this vale, and came

in sight of the celebrated Vale of St. John, of which more has been said than it appeared to me to deserve. I got out of the gig to view the Druid temple, on the hill above Keswick; it is a circle of upright stones, in a field on the left of the road. The vale of Keswick, the lake of Derwentwater, and the mountains which surround them, now burst at once upon our view. But here, too, expectation had gone before me. So much has been said on these subjects, that it is difficult for reality to keep pace with imagination.

LETTER XXI.

TO MISS FREEMAN, OAKWOOD.

Keswick.

YESTERDAY morning we hired a boat for six shillings, to carry us round the Lake of Derwentwater. On the left appeared Wallow Crag, a perpendicular rock, fifteen hundred feet high, with wood starting out of its crevices; and, farther on, Falcon Crag, full as high, but not so remarkable. We landed at Barrowgate, and climbed a wood, to see a waterfall above Ashness House, not to be compared with that at Ambleside. From thence we rowed to

Lowdoor, where we landed again. We had the larger cannon fired; and it was curious to hear the rattling peal reverberated from the mountains: as it first sounded in our ears, we almost looked to see if it were visible. It was silent while it passed the lake, and we believed it over: we started on hearing it from the opposite side: another silence and another peal ensued, each fainter than the last, till it died away.

We now entered Borrowdale; so unlike the Borrowdale delineated by Gilpin, that I looked round in vain for the place I sought. had been taught to expect enormous concave rocks, that shut out the mid-day sun, and no such could I find. Rocks there were, towering high, intermixed with wood, and prodigious masses of them broken off, and lying on the ground; but a sun beamed over them which threw

Lowdoor, where we landed again. We had the larger cannon fired; and it was curious to hear the rattling peal reverberated from the mountains: as it first sounded in our ears, we almost looked to see if it were visible. It was silent while it passed the lake, and we believed it over: we started on hearing it from the opposite side: another silence and another peal ensued, each fainter than the last, till it died away.

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me in a fever. The village of Grange too, in the bottom, presented no other image than a small assemblage of rustic cots, such as I had often seen before. If ever you mean to visit the lakes, my dear Margaret, burn your books: too much has been said of lake scenery. Were it possible to come unexpectedly on such objects, they would indeed be striking; but every thing has been described with all the warmth of fancy; every beauty has been pointed out; every spot from which each is to be viewed; till nature has been reduced to a system, examined by rule, and much of its effect is lost.

We walked up to Bolder (pronounced Boodther) Stone; an immense mass of rock fallen from above; though I could not discover the place. Here description had given me an idea short of truth. A ladder is reared against it

for those who choose to ascend to its top: I thought the place to view it was below.

The lake of Derwentwater, on which we again embarked, is three miles and a half long, and one and a half broad. Our chief boatman told us it was very safe for oars, but not so for a sail, on account of the sudden gusts of wind that came down from the mountains. The rowers frequently see these gales on the water; when they put the head of the boat to the blast, and lie still till it is over. A gentleman, who has lately purchased one of the islands of Derwentwater, contrary to the advice of older men, would sail in a small boat on the lake. He was met by one of these breezes, which laid his vessel on her side in a moment. He let go the sail, and she righted; but not before his pockets were filled with water.

The islands on Derwentwater are much admired. There are four large, and four small. In my opinion, when an island is so large, or so near the shore, as not to leave a considerable space of water all round, it is rather an incumbrance than an ornament, in a general view. Lord's and Vicar's islands come under this description. The first is so called from the unfortunate Lord Derwentwater, and was joined to the main land by a drawbridge. The second, if I may be allowed the expression, is too large for the ground it stands on. At a distance, it makes a part of the main; and near, it is too bulky to make a part of the lake. I find another fault with the islands of Derwentwater. They are covered with trees, which appear stuck close together, like upright pins on a pin-cushion. On those of Winander

Mere, both tall trees and brushwood spring spontaneously; spreading, fringing the water, and waving with the wind.

The fairy palaces of these romantic lakes often change their masters. Indeed, of the palaces themselves, much good cannot be said. They remind me of the vulgar saying about meat and cooks: God Almighty made the ground they stand on; the buildings are by another master. Mr. Pocklington, who purchased Vicar's island, and vainly called it by his own name, has sold it to Colonel Peachy of the Manks Fencibles, and it is become Vicar's island again. The house upon it is the king of the monsters.

Mr. Pocklington instituted a naval fête of so extraordinary a kind, that it would scarcely be credited, if it were not well remembered. All the boats

of the lake assembled annually on a certain day, commanded by Peter Crossthwaite, formerly captain of an Indiaman, now owner and exhibitor of a museum at Keswick, and besieged the great island in form. The islanders, under Governor Pocklington, were prepared for their reception: cannon were fired on both sides; men pretended to drop down dead, and were besmeared with bladders of blood, brought for the purpose. When the island could hold out no longer, Governor Pocklington appeared in person, dressed in scarlet, and armed with a broad-sword, and surrendered the keys of the citadel to Admiral Crossthwaite, who gave it up to be plundered by his sailors. Then followed the best part of the jest. A butt of beef, and a barrel of strong beer, had been prepared, on purpose to be stolen; they

were born off in triumph by the sailors, and the evening concluded, in the common phrase, with the utmost festivity.

The host of strangers who come to visit this mountainous region are termed by the inhabitants *lakers*, and, immediately on their arrival, they "find each bird a bird of prey." Even Millichamp and I, a pair of poor lonely pigeons, not worth the plucking, were surrounded by these hawks. Their system of rapacity made me draw my purse-strings close; perhaps closer than I ought to have done. Before we entered Keswick, a paper was put into my hands, inviting me to visit the museum of Peter Crossthwaite, late *naval commander in India;* and assuring me, that his was the original museum, and the only one worth seeing. Every time we passed his house, his organ, moved by some invisible agent,

serenaded us. This was great civility; but I kept my shilling in my pocket. When we went to the lake, another paper was given me, importing that the museum of Thomas Hutton was particularly well worth seeing, and that it flourished in spite of slander; so I kept two shillings in my pocket. When we had landed at Barrowgate, the jurisdiction of the boatmen ceased; they consigned us over to a stately old damsel of a housekeeper, who led the way to the cascade, and our shillings went inevitably.

At Borrowdale we determined to be free. We left our rowers at the public-house, and began our march alone. Here crowds of children followed us, and held open every gate; but as we neither wanted their company nor their services, we did not choose to pay for them; and I was in possession of a

charm which dispersed them whenever I pleased. "Don't trouble yourselves to follow us; we shall not give you any thing." To one, a tall girl, with a child in her arms, I said, "You are old enough to go to service."

"Ise at sarvice," she replied.

"Then why are you here?"

"Ise ganging doon to th' hoose."

"And what wages have you?"

"I wark for meat."

"What is your meat?"

"Potatoes and sauce."

"And what is sauce?"

"Butter."

You would scarcely suppose that a woman wanted to show us Bolder Stone, a stupendous mass of rock which we could not avoid seeing, and which astonished us so much, that we could look at nothing else! "Pray, good woman," said I, "what could you

shew us that we do not see?" She could shew us how we might shake hands under the stone. "Very well," said I; "then we will look at the stone where we are, and shake hands when we get home."

We had seen the fall of Lowdoor from the Lake, and finding that it was almost dry, we did not choose to go out of our way to see a waterfall without water, and went straight into Borrowdale. Returning, we thought we would step and look at the Channel, and were proceeding to a gate for that purpose, when a man followed us, and offered to open it. We bade *him*, as we had bidden the children, not trouble himself, and he retired. But we soon found he had not made the offer without good reason; for he had clapped a padlock on the gate, that nobody might approach the waterfall without

his assistance. We did not call him back, and this is the only one of my economies that I repent.

To-day, Millichamp has ascended Skiddaw, and I have visited several of the stations prescribed by law for views of the lake. The best is from a steep-wooded hill, called Castlet, from whence the whole water was spread before me, and seen, surrounding every island. Farther on was the vale of Keswick; beyond that, Bassenthwaite water; and on my right, Skiddaw. I shall here observe, that the family of Snowdon is called his sons; the progeny of Skiddaw is only a cub.

I wondered, in my walks, to see the prints of so many asses shoes, and some even on causeways, where it would have been difficult for an ass to get: several times, in the street, I turned my head hastily, thinking a horse was

at my heels; and, perhaps, saw nothing but an old woman. The shoes of the common people unravelled these mysteries. Their soles are of wood, about an inch in thickness, and shod before and behind with iron; or, as they call it, *carkered*. Besides these, a plate of iron, the depth of the sole, is fastened round the toe, which is called *snout-banding*. A pair of shoes, thus carkered and snout-banded, will frequently last twelve months, without mending; and it is surprising to see the dexterity with which even old persons and children carry the unwieldy load.

In my account of the sharks of Derwentwater, I omit our watermen, and our landlord at the Queen's Head. The former candidly owned, to James, that they expected no other gratifica-

tion than the six shillings agreed for: one of which was claimed by the owner of the boat; one spent at the inn which recommended it; and two they each had for rowing. As they desired no additional reward, I was perverse enough to give them one. Our landlord added a reasonable bill to great civility and attention; and I shall, at any time, find pleasure in recommending his house to my friends.

To-morrow morning, we once more turn our faces towards Arrowby Lodge. I say nothing of Millichamp, because he is writing to you himself. Only I will tell you, for fear he should not, that though he keeps the main body of his garments about him, small detached pieces of apparel, such as night-caps, gloves, and pocket handkerchiefs, are deserting him daily. I have some

thoughts of taking charge of his purse myself, as it has had one or two good chances of escaping.

One set of long letters is enough.—You will oblige me by putting these in your pocket, and reading them to Mr. Oakwood.

LETTER XXII.

TO MISS FREEMAN, OAKWOOD.

Milthrop.

We quitted Keswick for Ambleside, from which it is distant sixteen miles, early in the morning. The boasted view from Castrigg, the hill above Keswick, I thought inferior to that from Castlet; but it is the first which strikes strangers, who generally approach from that side, and I believe they are right in so doing. From Ambleside we should have taken Keswick first, and have returned by Ullswater. Our road now lay through a narrow dale, with Skiddaw

behind; and when we lost it, we opened on Helveylin, which appears to me the most stupendous mountain of the country. The dale became beautiful; rocks, woods, and steep hills rose out of it, and varied with every turn of the road. Behind one of these, Leathes water started up; it is about three miles in length, but almost divided in two.

At the Cherry Tree at Wythburn, we stopped to breakfast, and desired to have coffee immediately. After waiting half an hour, I went into the kitchen, and found a slice of bread toasting itself by the fire. It entered the parlour soon after, exhibiting a stripe of black in the middle, and one of white on each side, the breadth of the bars. Its texture was so solid, as to be proof against the butter, which was reduced to an oil, and covered the plate. This

was accompanied by three pints of water, made muddy, under the denomination of coffee; which James, who was behind the scenes, told us, afterwards, was made by throwing a very small quantity of coffee into a large tea-kettle. We thought we had mistaken our inn, and expressed our doubts to its mistress; but she assured us that her's was the house frequented by the quality; and we were convinced of it, when we found she charged the same for our breakfast that we should have paid at the first inns in England.

We had now an ascent of a mile and a half to Dunmail Raise; the top of a pass in the mountains, where Dunmail, the last king of Cumberland, who was slain in the tenth century, lies buried under a grass-grown heap of stones. The wall which divides the counties of Cumberland and Westmoreland, runs

over the centre. The descent is steeper on the Westmoreland side, and, at the bottom, lies the beautiful little Lake of Grassmere. Rydal water, which is yet smaller, succeeds it; and has some charming little islands, decorated with wood of nature's own planting. I could have wished its owner had taken the pains to remove the weeds, which shoot above the surface of the water.

Our road from Keswick to Ambleside, after having ascended Castrigg, has been a continued defile, between two ranges of mountains, divided across by Dunmail Raise. The enterprising hand of man seems to have formed three roads over different passes, in the chain of mountains which rise in Cumberland and Westmoreland. The western is this, which is not very difficult of access. The middle is

Kirkstone, which, I believe, till of late, was considered as impassable. The eastern is the great road over Shap Fells, which I have not seen. The lakes, which occupy the foot of these passes, seem proportioned to the height of the passes themselves. The large ones of Winander Mere and Ullswater lie on each side the lofty Kirkstone; the smaller ones of Grassmere and Leathes Water on each side Dunmail Raise.

In the cool of the evening we walked back a mile and a half to Rydal, and, entering a door in the park wall, had half a mile of steep ascent to the waterfall. The proprietor has had the discretion to let his place alone, wisely supposing he could not mend it: except in the necessary accommodation of a footpath, his hand does not appear in it. It would be injustice to judge of

the fall in this dry season, which has emptied Lowdoor; but the accompaniments surpass all I ever saw. Bolder rocks, indeed, I have seen; trees so naturally and beautifully disposed, never.

We were conducted out of the park the way we had entered. "But," said I to our guide, "may not we see the small cascade?" for I was too learned not to know all we had to expect. He made no answer, but opened another door in the wall, which led us into a thick wood, almost excluding daylight. I did not think it possible for trees to have spread so deep a gloom. Emerging from this, we passed an open lawn, and entered another dark embowering shade. Here our guide opened the door of a mean-looking building; and though I knew what it was to offer to our view, I stood

motionless when I entered it. Neither description nor fancy could paint any thing so beautiful; magic, alone, seemed equal to the effect: how, then, can I convey an idea of it to you! I can but say that we looked through a window, without either frame or glass, and saw, at a few yards distance, the water-fall, environed by trees, which shut out heaven above, and earth around. Over the top is thrown a bridge, that is less picturesque than it has been, since humanity has added parapet walls; but, if I had not been told the circumstance, I should not have imagined it could be more so than it is. A servant, riding over it, on a dark night, fell, with his horse, into the pool of the cascade below. They had neither of them any bones broken, and, though much hurt, they both recovered; but parapet walls were immediately raised on the bridge, to prevent the possibi-

lity of such an accident in future. There are trout in the pool, and one may fish out of the window; but a party of *lakers*, a few weeks ago, did much better. They dined in this enchanting retreat, and the poor trout dined with them.

Our road lay now by Kendal and Burton, to Lancaster; but, not choosing to go the beaten track, we yesterday morning crossed the head of Winander Mere, and breakfasted at the little town of Hawkeshead, five miles from Ambleside. Before we reached it, we had a charming view of the vale in which it stands, including Esthwaite water, about two miles in length. From Hawkeshead, our road lay on the border of the water: and, on quitting the vale, we passed through light woods, and by gentlemen's houses, till we came into the woods which skirt Winander

Mere, of which we now and then caught a glance. At nine miles from Hawkshead, we arrived again at Newby Bridge, having made the circuit of the banks of Winander Mere.

From Newby Bridge, I chose rather to encounter rocks I did not know, than sands I did; and we have come fourteen miles to Milthrop, over scars and mosses almost frightful. After a long and gradual ascent, we found ourselves on the top of a hill called Tawtop. Possibly, if the orthography adhered to the original meaning, it might be Talltop. From hence we looked, over a turbury below, to Witherslack Scar, which rose beyond, so destitute of verdure, that at the first glance Millichamp took the ash-coloured rock for ploughed fields. The descent from Tawtop was about half a mile: steeper than Kirkstone; steeper

than any thing I ever saw; except the old Welsh road from Pont Aber Glaslyn, to Tan y bwlch. I felt the same sensation here as there; fear lest the horses should not be able to keep on four legs, as they walked slowly over such unequal ground. You may be assured we walked too.

Having crossed the vale, which is a mixture of rock and peat, we ascended Witherslack Scar, as high as it is cultivated, and then went along its side; leaving the enormous ploughed rocks above. To this scar succeeded one still higher, called Whitbarrow Scar, the rocky summit of which had exactly the appearance of a ruined castle. As I looked up, I fancied I could distinguish walls and towers. Below us was Foulshaw Moss, with our road, which is called the Long Causeway, running across it, like a white

thread; and beyond this a better country. The moss affords a passage to two small rivers, which join the Kent a little farther down; and as nature, in complaisance to these, has given them a valley as level as their own waters, she has made herself amends, by raising a barrier of huge rocky fells on one side, and not very small rocks on the other. At Leven's bridge we crossed the Kent, and got into another world. No more mosses or rocks, but the finest verdure and the noblest trees. The scenery about the bridge is uncommonly beautiful. Leven's park is the seat of the Earl of Suffolk.

We did not arrive at Milthrop till late last night; and we shall not leave it till evening, on account of the heat. Cartmel, Hawkeshead, and Milthrop, please me much; three pleasant, poor, and quiet towns, that do not, all to-

gether, afford one post-chaise. There is only one inn in each, and these are rather mean; but the people are civil, the provisions good, and the charges so moderate, that one would not think the same country supplied the food which furnishes the neighbouring inns on the great roads.

I was sitting to-day, after dinner, with Millichamp, when, his shirt bosom being a little open, I espied a black ribband. "Millichamp," said I, "what have you hanging to that ribband?"

He hesitated, and replied, "A remembrance of Margaret."

"A picture?"

"No."

"A lock of hair?"

"No."

"What then?"

"I will tell *you*," he answered,

" because you will not laugh at me; but I should be afraid to tell any other person."

He then drew from his bosom a bit of folded writing-paper, which contained—what?—A darn in a piece of diaper, in which the threads were as exactly laid, as they had been at first by the shuttle of the weaver. I contradicted his good opinion of me; for I could not help laughing, and exclaiming, " What a remembrance! and by the fair one's own hand!"

" You may laugh," said Millichamp; " but a picture would only have reminded me of my Margaret's beauty, and a lock of hair could only have attached my ideas to her person; but this is an emblem of her virtues. This, as I will prove to you, proclaims her affection, industry, modesty, and ta-

lents. If she had not loved me, she would not have darned my night-cap. If she had not been industrious, she would not have darned it. If she had not been modest, she would have told me she had done it. And if she had not been ingenious and correct, she could not have done it so well."

"And so, as a proof of your Margaret's virtues, you cut it out of your night-cap?"

"I did; and determined to wear the hole in it for her sake; but, when it came from washing, it was mended again, though not so neatly as before; and I believe it was done in a coarser manner, that the hand of the workwoman might not be suspected."

Dear Margaret, how fortunate that such a profound reasoner should come to your door! How many

young women might live to be wrinkled before they met with a logician who could deduce all these consequences from a darn in a night-cap!

END OF THE FIRST VOLUME.

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